



Contact

God Is Still Speaking,

VOL XXIII, No. 2 • CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE EDITION • JUNE/JULY 2007 • TWO SECTIONS • SECTION A • 600008

A Son of the Conference Bids Farewell

BY REV. KENT SILADI

The time has come for me to say goodbye to the Connecticut Conference. This is no small or easy task for me, since the Connecticut Conference has been my home for my entire life. I was raised up in this Conference. My ministry here has been filled with deep and abiding relationships, moments of great joy and moments of deep sorrow and challenge. Words cannot express my profound thankfulness for the ways in which my ministry has been embraced and for the grace extended to me in my various roles of leadership over the years. In both the mistakes I have made and the accomplishments that have been made in partnership with others, I have grown through the experiences and opportunities made available to me in this setting of Conference ministry.

I was nurtured by the Conference for this ministry. I had the blessing of being invited to serve as a Search Committee consultant and later as a Conflict Consultant. I served on an Association Committee on Ministry and was part of the former program Department team called "Church in Society." Chairing that team allowed me to serve on the Conference Board of Directors during a tumultuous time in our Conference's life. As a local church pastor I was blessed to supervise students from Yale Divinity School and given the opportunity to teach at Yale as well. All of these opportunities provided me with the background and the training that prepared me well for life as a Regional Minister.

The greatest blessing of this ministry has been the building of the relationships that I have had with so many people. I have loved working with the pastors, churches and Associations of the South Central Region. For a decade I have been blessed to work with a Conference staff that not only works hard on your behalf with a

See page 3

LET IT SHINE

The UCC at 50 Years!
"The World Comes to Hartford"

Synod in the City

Saturday, June 23

Celebrate our past. Talk about our future.

The day-long Synod in the City event features speakers, theologians, artists, performers and multi-media presentations in a host of events, forming an inspiring and challenging mosaic of cultural voices from across the country and around the world. Presenters include:

- **Bill Moyers**, journalist and keynote speaker at 10:30 a.m. in the Civic Center
- **Leonard Pitts, Jr.**, Pulitzer Prize-winner, columnist
- **Kevin Phillips**, historian
- **Billy Mills**, Olympic gold medalist
- **Rev. Peter Gomes**, Harvard Divinity School
- **Ricardo Esquivia** of Justapaz in Colombia
- **Ray Kurzweil**, Artificial Intelligence expert/inventor
- **John Hockenberry**, Peabody Award-winner
- **Davey D.**, Hip hop historian/community activist
- **Sen. Barack Obama**, 2:30 in the Civic Center
- **Voices of the Pacific**, gospel choir
- **Valerie Tutson**, storyteller
- **Walter Brueggemann**, Old Testament scholar

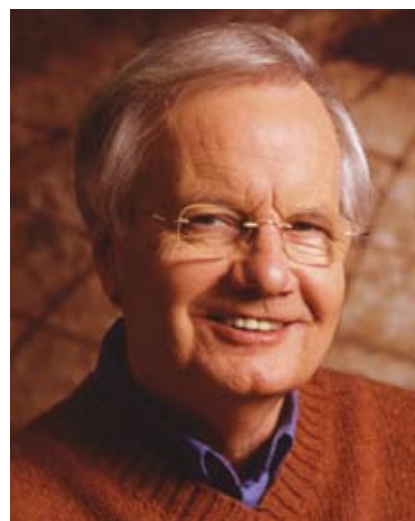
And many more!

Synod in the City is open to everyone, for the single day price of \$50. The event is anchored at the Civic Center, and a variety of other accessible venues within a two-block radius in downtown Hartford, as well as Bushnell Park, where musicians, choirs and others will perform, and children's "fun booths" will be set up. Shuttle buses will be available.

Join us for a festival of worship, workshops, lectures, concerts and much more as we celebrate 50 years of faithful ministry, and our future as a diverse community listening for God's stillspeaking voice!



Barack Obama



Bill Moyers



Marian Wright Edelman

Barack Obama Joins 'Synod in the City' Roster

U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-Ill.), an active UCC member since 1988, has accepted an invitation to speak at UCC General Synod 26, June 22-26, in Hartford. The invitation was issued more than a year ago.

Obama, a member of Trinity UCC in Chicago, will speak to delegates and visitors during the special day-long "Synod in the City" event on Saturday, June 23, at the Hartford Civic Center.

Obama joins an impressive line-up of presenters during the five-day General Synod that includes journalist Bill Moyers, activist Marian Wright Edelman, preacher Peter Gomes, actress Lynn Redgrave, author Marilynne Robinson, columnist Leonard Pitts, Jr. and many more. (*Additional information is available at www.ucc.org/synod*)

Obama, a Democratic candidate for President, has spoken often about his profession of faith, his membership in the UCC and the need for the nation to take seriously the concerns of religious Americans.

The Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC's general minister and president, said Obama will further strengthen the draw to the UCC's 50th anniversary gathering.

"Sen. Obama is one of the most exciting figures on the political landscape today," Thomas said. "More than that, he is a public figure who takes seriously the relationship between faith and public life. We look forward to being challenged by one of our membership about *See page 3*

The Revelation of Synod



The United Church of Christ General Synod is an anomaly in our culture:

- It is a gathering that celebrates our conviction that Jesus Christ makes us one body and at the same time celebrates our rich and deep diversity.
- It is a legislative assembly that speaks only for itself, yet to all of us both within and outside the denomination.

- It is a joyous gathering of a Christian family that stretches around the globe and yet affirms that the local church is the basic unit of its life and ministry.
- It is unabashedly Christian, yet welcomes interaction with people of other faiths and of no faith.
- It is unapologetically convinced of the imperative of

faith and faithfulness, yet unafraid of the challenges of living that faith fully in the midst of culture and world.

So when the Synod gathers, we will hear a remarkable array of speakers and presenters. Many of them will be UCC. Yet an equal number will be people from outside our tradition, people who are radically secular,

requires a mature openness that is rooted in confident conviction that is at once both inviting and discerning. It demands of us that we look to the larger world around us as we enter our next 50 years, not just to the interior life of the church.

Such a spirituality is a breath of fresh air, a long drink of cool water, in the context of a world that increasingly knows only a Christianity that sees "the other" as threat, that seeks to dominate, and that defines the faith

It takes a particular spirituality to welcome challenge. It is a spirituality that recognizes that God speaks not only through the hallowed pages of Biblical text, but also in the midst of culture, community and confrontation.

who come from other cultures, and who will challenge our worldview. Many of us relish moments like this. Others are uncomfortable.

It takes a particular spirituality to welcome challenge. It is a spirituality that recognizes that God speaks not only through the hallowed pages of Biblical text, but also in the midst of culture, community and confrontation. This spirituality evokes in us an openness to seek the gifts that others bring rather than to close ourselves off because revelation is over. It

in the narrowest of terms. Our spiritual journey June 22 to 26 will be accompanied by cultural, political and theological commentators, by rappers, storytellers, and futurists, by choirs, artists and doctors, by peacemakers, Bible professors, and actors, by people we never thought we'd meet and those we never thought we'd get to meet!

We are an anomaly in this world right now. Let's meet in Hartford and celebrate our experience of the Holy Spirit and Let It Shine!

Needed: Eco-Justice Evangelists

BY REV. GORDON S. BATES

At the 2005 General Synod in Atlanta, two resolutions were passed relating to environmental concerns. One was entitled "A Call for Environmental Education and Action"; the other, on the topic of energy usage, was "A Resolution on Supporting Congregations and Providing Guidance for Stewardship of God's Creation during the Coming Period of Declining Fossil Fuels."

Long titles, pointing to major environmental crises facing the world.

A combined Task Force on Environment and Energy has been meeting to find ways to implement the "Therefore's" of the two Resolutions. We have discovered the following realities:

Naysayers abound There are people who simply are not convinced that the environmental crisis is real, or if real, that it is at a critical stage. Some skeptics think nature will resolve its own problems, or that we should trust that God will take care of things, or that science will find a solution.

The Scientific consensus abounds even more International scientific studies have documented beyond any reasonable doubt that global warming, energy depletion and environmental degradation of the planet is real. The physical world beneath our feet is indisputably changing, as is the thin layer of breathable air. We are approaching significant, irreversible "tipping points." These realities must be dealt with politically, socially and personally.

As Christians, we must also rethink these problems theologically. If we believe that God is still speaking, then we must seek to understand God through the voice of nature as well as the Bible and the wisdom of the Gospel.

Three scientific facts confront us

- The amount of fossil fuel available for the world's increasing demands is finite and decreasing rapidly, and the probabilities of finding abundant new sources of oil and natural gas are negligible. And while energy from alternative sources such as wind, water, bio mass and hydrogen will certainly increase, no new source known to us now can provide the basis for the civilization that oil and natural gas have allowed us to build. Coal, the most extensive fuel source still available in quantity, is also the worst polluter of the atmosphere and the

costliest to clean up. We face a future in which profound conservation of energy will be critical, one marked by massive reductions in consumption of goods and services if those who follow us are to have their chance to survive and thrive.

- The list of serious environmental concerns ranges from unprecedented loss of animal, marine and plant species during the past 50 years to the depletion of critical wetlands. The destruction of tropical forests in just the past 20 years has been on the order of 200 million hectares, equal to the size of Mexico. Add to this the damage being done through the pollution of the oceans and the air and the depletion of fresh water.
- The UCC has undertaken a special concern, commonly called Eco-justice. It addresses the environmental harm being done to the poor and the minorities in the U.S. and the world. At the General Synod in Hartford, a report on **Toxic Waste and Race** will be distributed, updating a 1987 report by the same title that first exposed the injustice done to those who lack political clout to defend their neighborhoods from toxic waste dumping. A DVD from Justice and Witness Ministries called "**Troubled Waters**," depicting the crisis faced by many around the world for a safe water supply, also will be available.

The Task Force on Environment and Energy will recommend to the General Synod an intentional integration of environmental and energy information throughout the UCC, as well as ways to bring a concern for the natural world into our worship services; guidelines for legislative advocacy; and resources for individuals and congregations.

On the Conference level, we welcome the participation of those interested in these issues and in pursuing these same objectives. If you work in the areas of environment or have information and expertise to share, please join us.

As stewards of the natural blessings of God, I believe we are called to repent of our past exploitation of the earth and of its resources, and to be evangelists for the environment and eco-justice. The UCC has already played a key leadership role in this struggle. In the years to come, even more will be required of us. With God's guidance we can transform our trust in God's everlasting love into actions that seek to rectify past and present injustices to the environment, for the benefit of all God's creation. Let's do it.

The Rev. Gordon S. Bates is Interim Associate Pastor at First Church of Christ, Congregational in Glastonbury, and a member of the UCC Task Force on Environment and Energy.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

BY LOIS HAGER

When I picked up my pastor, the Rev. Deborah Blood, and fellow congregation members Anne and Dave Weaver, to drive to Arlington, Virginia, for Ecumenical Advocacy Days, I had very little idea about what would happen there. I agreed to go largely because it would give the four of us a chance to talk more about our mutual interest in the situation in Colombia, which we visited last summer with a Witness for Peace delegation, and to renew friendships with other members of that delegation.

The conference was sponsored by some 50 faith-based groups from many denominations. The registration scene was like that of any conference, with lots of people milling around collecting schedules, looking for rooms and greeting acquaintances. The approximately 1,000 attendees could choose from among eight tracks - Africa, Asia Pacific, Eco-Justice, Global Security, Jubilee/Economic

Justice, Latin America, Middle East, and USA. I chose Latin America. Each offered its own seminars, some of which overlapped with other tracks, but most addressed the general theme of the conference, "And How Are the Children?"

The Latin America track opened with an impressive performance by a troupe of actors and musicians from the Washington area who dramatized some of the cultural problems immigrant families face in the United States. I also attended seminars on Latin American environmental destruction and economic globalization. I was impressed by the quality of both the presenters and the seminar participants, who asked clear and pertinent questions. Saturday evening, those of us who had gone to Colombia or who had a special interest in the situation there, met with Ricardo Esquivia, who is leading an effort to improve the lives of people displaced from their homes by the civil war in Colombia. As he had done when we traveled with him last summer, he brought us up to date on his government's activities, and put a very human face on the miseries encountered

by that country's more than 3 million displaced people.

The conference schedule included time for denominational gatherings and plenary sessions. On Saturday, UCC members from across the country met for lunch and were introduced to UCC central office program staff. Sunday, Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund was the preacher for the worship service. She gave a very strong endorsement of the need for universal health care for children.

The plenary session that followed focused on the main goal of the conference: to establish a unified agenda with which to approach our legislators on visits to Capitol Hill the next day. The three agenda items were: to provide **health coverage** for every child in the U.S. who is not now covered; to refocus government spending on **peace** rather than war; and to commit to combating **global warming** by reducing carbon emissions. I agree with the goals, but I don't think the presenters were responded effectively to some of the issues raised during this session.

On Monday morning, we went to Capitol Hill and had a good meeting with Congressman John Larson's staff. I was impressed on the way to see lots of other conference attendees armed with their Ecumenical Advocacy Days tote bags converging on the Congressional and Senate Office Buildings. This was really the highlight of the conference for me. I know that only a few voices are needed to make a politician take an interest in a particular issue. State representatives have told me that if they get three phone calls from constituents on an issue, they pay attention.

On this day in Washington, faith-based organizations had a thousand people going to their elected representatives and asking for positive action on children's health, world peace, and global warming. It reinforced my belief that we do in fact live in a democracy, and we can and must insist on having our principles embodied in government action.

Lois Hager is a member of the First Congregational Church in Bloomfield and a member of the Conference's Colombia Partnership Committee.

GENERAL SYNOD

New UCC Heritage Web Site

Many of us can identify historical figures like Harriet Beecher Stowe or Horace Bushnell, but how about others of significance to our church, such as Henry Opukaha'ia, Jupiter Hammon or Gertrude Chandler Warner?

In preparation for General Synod, an interactive web site (www.ctuccheritage.org) has been developed to better acquaint us with the rich legacy of our denomination right here in Connecticut.

Check It Out!

The home page highlights some of the historic persons, sites, institutions and events of Connecticut's UCC (Congregational) history. It also contains a page showing many church and institutional seeds that have been planted around the country by Connecticut church people.

One page contains historical postcards depicting many of our church buildings throughout the state. Another describes a bus tour that will highlight the life of Jonathan Edwards, visiting some sites associated with him. (See event listing on page 5)

The web site will be an important resource for understanding and appreciating the contributions of our historic forebears and how they influence our lives even today.

Siladi *Continued from page 1*

deep devotion and commitment to their ministries, but who also truly enjoys and respects one another. I already know that what I will miss the most will be all of these wonderful relationships.

I believe that this Conference has prepared me well for my next ministry opportunity to serve as the Conference Minister of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ. I will forever hold this Conference in my heart and in my prayers. I wish you well and pray God's continued blessings upon this beloved Conference.

The Rev. Kent Siladi leaves his position as South Central Regional Minister of the CT Conference effective June 1. He has accepted the call of the Florida Conference to be their new Conference Minister, beginning July 15. Kent has been an invaluable part of the ministry of the CT Conference for many years. His friends and colleagues will miss him, even as we wish the full measure of God's blessings on his life and work. A celebration of his ministry will take place on Sunday, June 3 at 2:30 at the First Congregational Church of Madison.

Obama *Continued from page 1*

"Sen. Obama... is a public figure who takes seriously the relationship between faith and public life. We look forward to being challenged by one of our membership about how to make a difference in the world."

*The Rev. John H. Thomas,
UCC general minister and president*

throughout downtown Hartford where an array of speakers, artists and performers will help take Synod out of its traditional convention-hall setting and into the streets of the city. "The world comes to Hartford ... courtesy of the UCC" is how the event is being billed locally.

"You come to church — in the first place — precisely because you are of this world, not apart from it," Obama said. "Trinity UCC has been a true community to me — a place in which the mind, heart and soul come together to celebrate God's goodness."

how to make a difference in the world."

As of early May, more than 6,000 people had registered for General Synod, which guarantees it will be the denomination's largest national gathering in its 50-year history. With several weeks still remaining, there's time to join the celebration gathering, the first ever Synod in Connecticut, where the United Church of Christ is the largest Protestant church.

Billed as a high-point of the five-day gathering, "Synod in the City" will be a day-long series of celebratory events held in multiple venues

Three CT Women to Be Honored

The Office of Local Church Ministries' Worship and Education Ministry Team will recognize three women from the Connecticut Women of the United Church of Christ at General Synod 26. The occasion is the Honored Lay Women's Luncheon, Sunday, June 24th at noon at the Hartford Civic Center. Along with other women from across the UCC, they will be honored for their faithful and invaluable commitment of service to their church, their schools and community organizations.

Dawn Scott, an attorney and college instructor, is a member of the Dixwell Ave. Congregational Church, UCC in New Haven. Currently she serves as a Deacon, is Chairperson of the Church Anniversary Committee, Treasurer/Secretary of the Music Committee, and a member of the Joyful Praise Choir. As an attorney, she worked for 13 years at the Legal Aid Society in New York representing indigent clients.

Her husband, The Rev. John H. Scott III, writes, "Dawn's light shines brightest for the children. She strongly believes that our society and world can only improve as we invest our time in our children." Dawn also has encouraged and supported other women to move into leadership positions, serving as a voice to many so they can allow God to use them wherever there is a need.

Irene Choi, an engineer who lives with her family in Hebron, is a member of First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC, Glastonbury. She sings in the choir, teaches in the Explore Program (Middle School), is founder of the "Mom and Friends" fellowship group for young women, and is a member of the Conference's Korean Partnership Committee.

Irene has served as an interpreter for Korean pastors visiting Connecticut, a translator for Korean women attending New England Women's Celebrations and has traveled to Korea as a delegate and translator from our Conference. Last summer, she was a leader on the Partnership's "Sacred Journey" youth trip to Korea.

"Irene has been a light in her committed faithfulness to all activities in which she has been involved" writes The Rev. David Taylor of First Church, Glastonbury. "Her enthusiasm, energy and faith brightly shine. Irene has an inclusive vision of God's world."

Doris Andrews is a woman of many gifts, which she has graciously shared over the years. A retired nutritionist, her work involved both college instruction and consulting. As a member of The United Church of Christ in Southbury she has served in numerous positions, beginning with the Christian Education Committee and Church School Superintendent. This was followed by the Board of Deacons, the Mission Committee and Church Council during two periods. Presently, she is Church Clerk and a member of Women's Fellowship. She was a Delegate to General Synod in 2003 and 2005.

Her pastor, the Rev. Walter Pitman, writes, "Doris has been a beacon of light at the United Church of Christ, Southbury for longer than most have been members. She is the constant in our ever flowing and changing church. She is the one we turn to so that we can remember our roots and our beginnings."

To join in the celebration of all the honored women, please go to www.ucc.org/synod, click on "Registration for Meals" and "Honored Lay Women's Luncheon."



50 Year Anniversary Reunion

Silver Lake Conference Center will celebrate 50 years of changing the lives of young people (of all ages!) in 2007. Be a part of the Reunion on August 19, 2007; stay for the day or for the conference. Come and share the joy!

The Celebration Day will include live music, videos, worship, singing, decade gatherings, Silver Lake trivia, a cookout lunch, volleyball, the challenge course, Frisbee Golf, a tree planting, games, time to visit with long-time friends, and more! The cost for the day is \$20.00 per person with a maximum family fee of \$80.00, which

includes the cookout meal. Children under 3 are free; youth must be accompanied by an adult.

To register for the Silver Lake Alums reunion conference (August 19-22), the 50th anniversary Celebration Day! (Sunday, August 19), or the Silver Lake Golf Tournament and 50th Anniversary banquet (Monday, September 24,) go to: silverlake.ctucc.org/alum/reunion.php

Please also consider completing the form to become part of our alumni/ae directory, and receive additional information about alumni activities at Silver Lake. (This form will not register anyone for the celebration event itself.)

THE SPIRIT IS MOVING... AND BAKING!

Cookie Goal: 14,000 Dozen

Cookies Pledged:
More than 10,000 Dozen

If you haven't yet put on your apron, please join us in this sweet endeavor to provide hospitality to all the delegates and visitors to General Synod. It's a Synod tradition for the host Conference, a way of making our guests feel at home - and what better way than to bake cookies!

The Connecticut Women of the United Church of Christ are coordinating this area of hospitality to help welcome people to Hartford, June 22-26.

We expect to serve 14,000 dozen cookies. That's right - we expect to serve about 168,000 cookies! If yours is one of the 150 churches that have already responded, WE THANK YOU! If your church has not pledged, consider yourself asked.

We already have more than 10,000 dozen cookies pledged, so we're well on our way! Please help us reach our goal, and be a part of General Synod.

For more information, contact the Cookie co-chairs, Margie Kreidler at 860-560-1097 or margiekreidler@sbcglobal.net; or Rev. Melanie Enfield at 860-667-1779 or jtinkham@cox.net. We look forward to hearing from you... and hearing those oven timers ding!

Silver Lake Summer - There's Still Time!

BY ANNE AND TIM HUGHES

How many "Lakers" does it take to clean out the Trash Rack landfill at Silver Lake on Earth Day? Well, one to drive the dump truck to the Transfer Station, six to pull out the scrapped metal and tires, bottles and cans, and one to put them back, "because they've always been there at Silver Lake..." No, really, it was an aligned effort, with this power group of eight volunteers, organized by Jen Gaudet of the Program Committee and Silver Lake Board members. The reclamation effort is well underway, to prepare for the new and final village of cabins to be built within the tree grove.

We were privileged to host the Spring Annual Meeting of the Conference at Silver Lake on a splendid May Saturday. The day featured the many natural, spiritual and human features that contribute to the experience we call Silver Lake. With the meeting's emphasis on God's environment, eco-justice, the capital campaign, sustainability and Christian community in harmony with nature, we hope that many of you were able to be here, some for the first time, and that as the "Church together" you took away a sense of the exhilarating presence of the Creator that we feel is ever-present here. Silver Lake is a special place where we fall in love, again, with God's gift of creation, and renew our call to be stewards, protectors, and revealers of this mission.

Summer 2007's great conferences still have some spaces available... bring a friend! Please go to <http://silverlake.ctucc.org> to learn all about summer opportunities at the Lake.

And spread the word about the 50th Reunion celebration on Aug. 19th. See Silver Lakers from the '50s through the '90s, and beyond. 1969's Camp Family Mom and Dad will be here, and many more people, too - some of whose names you haven't heard for years! Don't miss it!

Register for the Celebration Day, August 19, and for the Reunion Conference: Sunday through Wednesday, August 19-22. Come back to Camp: <http://silverlake.ctucc.org/alum/reunion.php>

You miss Silver Lake, and Silver Lake misses you!

Christian Community – Half a World Away



BY REV. RUTH MARTZ

Ha.na.nim.ee.ham.ge.sec.ur.won.ham.ni.da. (May God be with you.)

Irene Choi and I were honored to travel this April to Korea to attend the Annual Meeting of the Kyung-ki Presbytery. What wonderful hospitality and friendship we received from the pastors and elders of the Presbytery, and from members of the Choweol Church!

The Choweol Church, partner church of First Church of Christ Congregational in Glastonbury, served as our gracious host. We are very grateful to Senior Pastor Bae, the church staff and the entire congregation

for their hospitality, attentiveness and generosity. Choweol church members Unshil and Myung Jun Park welcomed us to their home and served

us delicious breakfasts of cod soup, Korean rice and spicy vegetables, and fried leek pancakes---thanks be to God!

Since we arrived in Korea shortly after the tragic events at Virginia Tech, there were many expressions of deep regret among our Christian brothers and sisters, along with concern that Americans will judge the Korean people negatively because of this tragedy. These words were included in the greeting that I brought from the Conference to members of the Kyung-ki Presbytery: "We know that you are grieving with us following the recent tragic deaths of students in Virginia. We all question why such things happen, but together we trust in God's love to bring healing and peace to all who mourn."

Through the Korean Partnership Committee of the Conference, not only do we have the opportunity to learn from one another, but also to celebrate the joys of our faith and the challenges we share. As a first-time visitor to Korea, I was impressed by the Christians I met, especially their commitment and dedication to active, ongoing participation in worship services (3-4 times weekly) and Bible study at their churches; and their hospitality and generosity, expressed

through meals and the exchange of gifts, a Korean tradition!

Their Annual Meeting resembled in many ways our own UCC gatherings, both in the Conference and national settings. There were passionate opinions expressed at the microphone; long debate and often heated discussion; laughter as well as the shaking of heads; prayerful worship; and the powerful chorus of voices singing in praise of God. When the Korean Partnership Committee gathered for a separate meeting, it was suggested that the Presbytery and Connecticut Conference consider creating a Sacred Journey cultural exchange program for adults, like the one we share for youth every other year. Finally, it was a source of great joy for the Partnership Committee when the Presbytery voted to make a contribution to *Now, For the Future: The Campaign for Silver Lake*, where Sacred Journey youth participants from Korea were welcomed in 2001 and 2005.

It was clear throughout the week that we share the desire to grow closer to God and to God's kingdom as we build partnerships between individual congregations and between the Kyung-ki Presbytery and our Conference. What a gift God is giving us, and what a sacred calling! May we continue to seek ways in which to deepen and expand the relationships we are forming.

I was honored that the Korean Partnership Committee invited me to

serve as its representative this year. In addition, the success and richness of this experience was made possible through the gifted ministry of Irene Choi, member of the Korean Partnership Committee and First Church in Glastonbury. Irene has worked to bring our two cultures together by educating both guests and hosts, Korean and American, during previous trips to Korea and Connecticut Conference Annual Meetings. We are blessed by Irene's faithfulness and dedication to this mission.

During General Synod in Hartford, would you be willing to help welcome the visiting delegates from the Kyung-ki Presbytery? In 2008, would you like to get your church involved in offering welcome and hospitality to Sacred Journey youth from Korea? How about joining a planning team to create a Sacred Journey program for adults? If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, rest assured that the experience will be rich and unforgettable. May God bless our shared mission and vision, so Christians from Korea and the Connecticut Conference may grow together as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Ruth Martz is the Associate Pastor for Discipleship Ministries, First Church of Christ Congregational, Glastonbury. For further information about the Korean Partnership Committee, please contact Jim Morgan at the CT Conference office at jimm@ctucc.org or 860-761-7123.

GENERAL SYNOD

Ricardo Esquivia, Colombian Peace Leader, to Speak at Synod

BY REV. BARBARA GERLACH

Ricardo Esquivia, a visionary Mennonite peace leader described by some as the "Gandhi of Colombia," will speak as part of "Synod in the City" on Saturday, June 23. Ricardo has dedicated his life to building peace in Colombia, a country with the worst human rights record and longest-running civil war in our hemisphere, a war which has left over 3 million people displaced – second only to Sudan.

The son of an Afro-Colombian father and an indigenous mother, Ricardo was raised on the Caribbean coast. When his father developed leprosy and was institutionalized, Ricardo lived on the streets until the Mennonite Church took him in and educated him in their school. The Mennonite Church became Ricardo's extended family and nurtured his commitment to peace, justice, and non-violence.

From that small school, he went on to study law and then returned to the Caribbean coast to organize poor farmers in Montes de Maria. Accused of being an ideologue for the guerrillas for his community organizing, Ricardo, his wife and four children fled, first to Cartagena and then to Bogota. There, he founded Justapaz, the Christian Center for Peace, Justice and Non-Violent Action. He served as its Executive Director for 13 years, developing work with displaced communities and projects for sustainable economic development and peace education. His work with conscientious objectors brought him into conflict with the Colombian military and forced him to flee into exile in the United States.

In a country where Protestants are a small minority, Ricardo helped establish the Commission for Restoration, Life, and Peace of the Colombian Council of Evangelical Churches (CEDECOL),

which he still serves as National Coordinator. In this capacity, he has facilitated the development of five regional commissions of pastors and lay leaders to help Protestant churches provide emergency assistance to the displaced, develop small-scale economic projects, and work with local leaders to build a grassroots movement for peace. He also has participated in national and regional dialogues with legal and illegal armed groups in Colombia.

In 2004, he moved back to the Caribbean Coast, forming a small, non-profit, faith-based organization, Sembrandopaz (SowingPeace). As a founding member with three Catholic Bishops of the Foundation of Development and Peace of Montes de Maria, Ricardo works regionally and ecumenically to increase civil society participation in a "laboratory of peace" funded through the European Union. Working with CEDECOL, he has

helped create a network of Associations for a Dignified Life in Solidarity (RED ASVIDAS) to develop income-generating projects, reweave the social fabric, and create an infrastructure for peace. There are now about 130 local, municipal, and regional church-based associations of ASVIDAS on the Caribbean coast, which include 5,000 people, 230 congregations, and 29 denominations.

The CT Conference has been involved in a Mission Partnership with Ricardo and his work with Justapaz and Sembrandopaz for the last decade. And Global Ministries just commissioned Michael Joseph as a "critical presence" missionary to work with Colombian Protestant churches through CEDECOL. Paz!

Rev. Barbara Gerlach, is Minister at First Congregational UCC, in Washington, DC and Colombia Liaison for Justice and Witness Ministries.

Excerpts from a sermon delivered at the Federated Church of Southbury, Connecticut on July 1, 1956, following the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches meeting in Omaha, where the merger was voted.

DYING TO LIVE

BY REV. HANK K. YORDON

II Corinthians 5:14 *For the love of Christ constrains us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

There was something different about the session on Saturday. An outsider might not have noticed. Men continued to disagree. The opponents to the merger exercised every parliamentary maneuver to postpone the inevitable. They still felt the hurt and pain and fear of losing what seemed to them to be the precious rights of our Congregational heritage, but there wasn't the bitterness of the day before. The Holy Spirit had entered in. The majority was still impatient, but they resisted all attempts to cut off debate. Men had their say. There was still tension. There was still struggle. But it was a struggle in love. The Spirit was there... When the vote was taken, 1,304 in favor of the union, 179 opposed, we didn't cheer. We prayed. There was no rejoicing. There was a humble faith that God in His mercy would bring great things from what we had done. There was a confident hope that we had been led by the Holy Spirit. There was a love, which reached out to those few who in conscience would withdraw and walk another way. There was gladness for what we believed to be a mighty thing for the cause of Christ. There was sadness and concern for those we had hurt who couldn't agree with what we had done.

In the early years of this movement towards union of separated church bodies, men thought it would be a very simple process. There will be as much pain and hurt in union as there was in the original separation... It hurts to give up the practices and privileges which come down out of the past. But it is a scandal to be separated by anything that is not essentially of Jesus Christ. The scandalously divided state of Christianity is a constant reminder of how far we are from living and moving and having our being in Him. The wounds must be healed. And what happened in Omaha is a word to all our denominations of how painful that process will be.

What is this merger going to mean in the life of our churches? Hear the words of our text. "For the love of Christ constrains us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." To live something has to die. This merger when consummated means that something will die in Congregationalism. Something will also have to die in the Evangelical and Reformed tradition. They will have to surrender all of the checks and balances and legislated authority of church courts and assemblies. They will have to give up that Presbyterian form of church government which is the basis for much of our nation's constitution and governmental organization. Something which is cherished by our new brethren is going to die.

And for us, Congregationalism will die to the extent that the inter-relatedness of the local church, association, conference and General Synod, will be described in black and white. We haven't liked things in black and white. There is something precious in the confusion and anarchy of a Congregational meeting. The lack of order testifies to the fact that Christ must be with us to get anything done.

What can I say to those of us who have seen in this union the first great step towards the Oneness of Christ's Churches? This is a great step. Other unions have taken place, but this is the first between two denominations with differing backgrounds and polities. One is from Europe. The other is from England. One is Presbyterian, the other Congregational. We are proving to the great denominations that it can be done. To those of us who approve this union has something died? Very little had died for me. I believe that this union is going to bring back a form of Congregationalism which was predominant in Connecticut during the last century. The orderly practices of this church which prevailed 150 years ago are those in which I think I will be most at home. I am giving up very little that is precious for me. I see practical advantages in financial savings in denominational publications and programs. I see the coming of a theology which is closer to my own than that of many of my present fellow ministers. To those of us who are giving up very little that is precious, are we willing to die? Search your hearts. Are you willing to let go the most precious things in your church life if Christ asks them of you? Are you willing to give up life itself for Him who died? For all? Are you willing to let everything go except your hold on Christ himself? You cannot live unless you die.

Some Highlights of the Synod Schedule

"Caring for Earth": Pre-Synod Day on the Environment, June 21, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

The UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries and Task Force on the Environment and Energy are sponsoring this pre-General Synod conference. Keynote speaker Jerome Ringo is Chairman of the Board of the National Wildlife Federation. He will be joined by the authors of the UCC's landmark 1987 report, "Toxic Waste and Race in the United States," Dr. Ben Chavis, Jr., and Charles Lee. Morning and afternoon workshops will address some of the crucial environmental concerns facing the planet, and a new report, "The UCC-Toward a National Environmental Focus," will be released. Other speakers and workshop leaders include Beverly Wright, founding director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice at Dillard University; and Robert D. Bullard, Ware Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Director of the Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta University.

Location: Immanuel Congl. Church, 10 Woodland St., Hartford
Cost: \$25.00.

Contact: Gordon Bates at gsbates34@yahoo.com

Amistad America "Atlantic Freedom Tour" Bon Voyage Celebration, June 21, 9 - 3

The Freedom Schooner Amistad will embark on a one and a half year journey across the Atlantic to England, where it will be part of the celebration of 200 years since Great Britain ended slavery; and to Africa, the goal of the original Amistad captives. The schooner's departure has been delayed so that visitors for the UCC's 50th anniversary General Synod can be part of blessing the vessel as it embarks on this significant voyage. The day's activities include an interfaith service in New Haven, an address from UCC General Minister and President John Thomas, a noontime Coast Guard Band concert, and 2 p.m. commissioning ceremony at the Amistad's berth at the New Haven wharf (see story on page 8).

Location: New Haven
Contact: Rev. Kent Siladi at 203-453-0614; or kents@ctucc.org

Let the Children Speak: Global Ministries International Dinner, June 24, 5:00 pm

Come listen as the stories of children from around the world are given voice at the General Synod 26 Wider Church-Global Ministries International

Dinner. The event includes presentation of the International Partners Mission Recognition Awards, given for outstanding ministry. Buy tickets when registering for General Synod, or use the email address below to obtain information about tickets if you will not attend Synod.

Location: Hartford Civic Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza, Hartford
Cost: \$32.00 per person.
Contact: Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115. 216.736.3218; wcmgsdinner@ucc.org

"Great Awakening" Bus Tour; Monday, June 25

If you're curious about the rich regional history of the Puritans in America, consider joining a half-day "Great Awakening" bus tour of sites related to one of America's greatest theologians, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758).

The tour, sponsored by Hartford Seminary and Yale Divinity School in conjunction with the General Synod, will occur Monday, June 25.

Ken Minkema, director of the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale Divinity School, is our guide. The tour begins at the Hartford Civic Center, site of General Synod 26. The first stop will be Edwards' birthplace in East Windsor Hill, where participants will view his home church, the family cemetery dating back to the late seventeenth century, and the president's house of the East Windsor Hill Seminary, founded in 1834.

From there, we travel the historic highway through Enfield, where in 1741, at the height of the Great Awakening, Edwards preached his most famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Next we go to Northampton, Massachusetts, where Edwards ministered for nearly a quarter of a century. Here participants will see the First Churches of Northampton, the Edwards Church, and the Bridge Street Cemetery, where the famous missionary David Brainerd is buried.

The tour concludes with a stop at Hartford Seminary, the institutional descendant of the East Windsor Seminary, where we will have lunch.

Space is limited. To reserve a seat, please contact Kelton Cobb, Professor of Theology and Ethics at Hartford Seminary and one of the tour planners, at (860) 509-9513 or kcobb@hartsem.edu.

A modest fee of \$20 will be charged for lunch and to defray costs.

CLASSIFIEDS

Connecticut Conference, UCC The Conference seeks an **Office Manager**, beginning July 9. Candidate must be team-oriented with a minimum of five years experience in Office Administration and excellent MS Office skills, and strong in communication, leadership and problem solving. Competitive salary and benefits. EEO/AA. Mail resume to: Office Manager, 125 Sherman St., Hartford, CT 06105

Connecticut Conference, UCC The Connecticut Conference seeks a full-time **Associate Conference Minister for Youth Ministries** to develop Conference-wide ministries with and by youth; build on and develop local churches' capacity for transformative ministries with youth; and identify and carry out strategies to transform youth culture, deepen Christian spirituality and support engagement in the work of justice and peace among their peers, their communities and around the globe. Working closely with Silver Lake Conference Center and other staff, this individual will be part of a dynamic staff team focusing on the future. We are an ONA conference, dreaming of becoming more multiracial and multicultural. Contact: Send a Profile and cover letter to CT Conference, Youth Search, 125 Sherman Street, Hartford, CT 06105.

POSITIONS

CHESHIRE – First Congregational Church seeks a full-time administrator for a fast-paced front office. This is a multi-faceted position requiring a person of many talents. This person acts as the “face and voice” of the church – greeting visitors, answering the phone, and working with members and staff; manages publication of weekly and monthly bulletins; works with the financial team; maintains contact with vendors of routine services; and supervises part-time staff and volunteers. A comprehensive compensation package is offered, with salary and benefits negotiable in the mid to upper-\$30,000 range, including liberal time off. For more information about the church, see www.cheshirecongregational.org. • Contact: Please e-mail resume to office@cheshirecongregational.org; or fax to 203-271-3938, Attention: Trustees.

CHESHIRE – First Congregational Church seeks a Director of Youth Ministries, 30 hours per week. This person will encourage and empower youth in their knowledge and experience of the Christian faith; provide consistent leadership for the youth ministry program; and work collegially with staff and lay leaders in expanding ministry to youth. Our youth meet every week throughout the school year. The program

is divided into middle school and high school, with participation distributed fairly evenly. We regularly have 40+ students attend group sessions on Sunday evenings and we have about 35 high school youth and adults signed up for our mission trip this summer. The ideal candidate will have three or more years of experience in youth leadership program. Also, a pertinent bachelor's degree is expected. • Contact: Please send your resume and a personal statement to Chris Cowles at mccowles@sbcglobal.net

HARTFORD – First Church of Christ in Hartford seeks an Interim Director of Christian Education to provide leadership to teachers and students in a diverse, multi-cultural urban setting. Center Church is an open and affirming congregation. Teacher training, classroom resourcing, and program development is involved, with an emphasis on building relationships with families. Children and youth include nursery through high school. 15 hours per week. Professional training preferred. **NEW IDEAS WELCOME.** Please send resume and letter of application to Center Church, 60 Gold St., Hartford, CT 06103. Attn: Marie Ferrantino; or e-mail to marie@centerchurchhartford.net

HIGGANUM – The Congregational Church, which loves good music in worship, seeks an enthusiastic music director, 10 hours per week. The salary is very competitive for the right candidate: creative choral direction, blend of music styles (Pilgrim Hymnal/Pipe Organ to spirituals/jazz), works well with children, and has “that special something.” Candidate must love music and be fun to work with. For more information about our church, go to www.hccucc.org. • Contact: Rev. Maxwell Olmstead, 860-345-4304; or maxolm@yahoo.com.

LEDYARD – Ledyard Congregational Church is developing a new faith-based youth program within a congregation committed to continued growth. They seek an individual with an appreciation and respect for young people who is willing to share his/her faith journey. Appropriate education and experience required. Preference is for individual who is a good role model and displays enthusiasm, sense of humor, and interest in getting to know others. Eight hours per week at \$18.00 per hour beginning July 1, with potential for negotiating hours and salary in January 2008. Contact: Ledyard Congregational Church Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 77 Ledyard, CT 06339; 860-464-9926; or visit www.uccwebsites.net/firstconglyardct.html

MILFORD - First Church of Milford seeks a full-time Music Minister/

Organist. Two services and six rehearsals weekly with Adult Choir, Youth Choir, Boys' and Girls' Choir, Junior Choir, and Bell Choir. Sanctuary has a 44 rank, 3 manual Holykamp organ, Yamaha grand piano, small harpsichord, and 5 octave Schulmerich handbells. Chapel has 3 rank, 2 manual Moller-Artiste organ and upright Yamaha piano. • Contact: Dick Furanna, 34 West Main Street, Milford, CT 06460; 203-530-2012

NORWICH - First Congregational Church seeks 2 octaves of handbells in good condition to purchase or lease. • Contact: Please call Kathleen Wells or the church office at 860-889-9520, Monday-Friday, 9-12.

NORTH HAVEN - North Haven Congregational Church (UCC) seeks a part-time Minister of Music to direct a vigorous church music program that enhances the worship and educational life of the congregation and embraces both contemporary and traditional sacred music. Responsibilities of this part-time position include serving as organist, conducting choral and chime choirs, and planning a community concert series. The successful candidate will be able to work creatively with persons of different age groups and musical ability. Apply to Music Search Committee, NHCC, 28 Church Street, North Haven, CT 06473; www.northhavenucc.org

PORTLAND – The First Congregational Church, UCC, is a growing, vibrant, multi-generational congregation of more than 300 members. They seek a creative, energetic Director of Christian Education who will lead, teach and nurture in a collaborative

setting. The position is part-time (approximately 15 hours per week; scheduling is flexible) with a negotiable salary commensurate with skills and experience. • Contact: Jeanette Hodge, 860-342-4093.

ROCKY HILL - Congregational Church is searching for a creative, energetic, and dedicated Christian Educator who will envision, nurture and coordinate educational programs of the church, relating to children, youth, and families. Responsibilities include supervising church school, including teacher recruitment and training, presenting children's sermons, and planning special seasonal/liturgical programs and activities. This is a year-round position, 20 hours per week. Please mail resume and direct any questions to the CE Search Committee, RHCC, 805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

SOMERS – The Congregational Church seeks a part-time (12-15 hours per week) energetic and experienced Director of Music/Organist. Interested candidate must be proficient in playing the organ, have excellent manual and pedal board skills, direct Senior Choir, Bell Choir, and Children's Choir, and be available for weddings, funerals and special services throughout the year. Candidate would work with the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor. For more information about the church, visit our website at www.somersnow.com/somerscong. • Contact: Please send resume and cover letter via e-mail (somerscong@somersnow.com), fax (860-763-5146) or mail (599 Main St., Somers, CT 06071) to the attention of the Music Committee.

RECENT & UPCOMING PASTORAL TRANSITIONS

New Calls

Burt, Steve from Interim Ministry to Pastor, First Congregational Church of Lyme, June 1, 2007

Pilletere, Mark from Pastor, Taftville Congregational Church to Pastor, Mill Plain Union Church, Waterbury, April 30, 2007

Strever, Wayne from Pastor, West Springfield, MA to Pastor, Second Congregational Church of Stafford, April 9, 2007

Resignations

Crites, Ann from Pastor, First Congregational Church of Haddam, March 1, 2007

Ferguson, Ken from Pastor, Storrs

Congregational Church, May 15, 2007

Pelc-Faszczka, Brenda from Senior Pastor, First Church of Christ, Congregational, Suffield, May 20, 2007

Robert, Clare From Associate Pastor, Congregational Church of Naugatuck, February 28, 2007

Retirements

Brown, Gary from Pastor, First Congregational Church of Stamford, June 30, 2007

Evans, Ron from Senior Pastor, First Congregational Church of Darien, June 3, 2007

Felletter, Pat from Pastor, Central Village Congregational Church, May 31, 2007

EVENTS

For fuller descriptions, including flyers and web links, about these and other events, visit www.ctucc.org/events.php

General Synod XXVI • June 22-26
 • Hartford Civic Center • **Come to General Synod** and help offer extravagant Connecticut welcome to the thousands of visitors coming to Synod. **Be part of the United Church of Christ** in action and celebrate 50 years as a denomination. More information is available at www.ctucc.org and www.ucc.org. Participate in a send-off for the Freedom Schooner Amistad on June 21, from 9 to 3 in New Haven. **Help bless the Amistad** on her journey to England to celebrate 200 years of the abolition of the slave trade throughout the British Empire, and then down the west coast of Africa to Sierra Leone. **Take advantage** of the many cultural, intellectual and learning experiences that will be offered during "Synod in the City" on June 23 at the Civic Center and throughout downtown Hartford. The day begins with worship and a keynote address from Bill Moyers, features remarks by UCC member Sen. Barack Obama in the afternoon, and concludes with a birthday festival at the

Civic Center in the evening. **Join in the Festival Worship on Sunday**, June 24 at 3 PM. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience of worship with UCC people from across the U.S. - a wonderfully diverse, faith enriching celebration of our covenant. • Contact: www.ucc.org/synod **SEE MORE GENERAL SYNOD EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE.**

Stewardship and the Christian Life • July 23 – 25 • Craigville Conference Center, Cape Cod, Massachusetts. • This premier stewardship event features Nick Carter, President of Andover Newton Theological School; Jim Antal, Minister and President of the Massachusetts Conference UCC; Bill Green, Minister and Team Leader for Stewardship and Church Finances, UCC; Shelly Stackhouse, Pastor of the Church of the Redeemer in New Haven; the Just Peace Players; and a host of workshop leaders. Storyteller the Rev. Bert Marshall will present his performance of the complete Gospel of Mark Alive! • Sponsored by the Stewardship Commission of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC. • Cost: \$225 includes room and board. • Contact: Andy Gustafson, 1 Badger Rd.,

Framingham, MA 01702; 508-875-5233; or • gustafson@macucc.org For more information and a schedule of events, go to www.macucc.org/stewardship

SILVER LAKE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DAY (AUGUST 19) AND ALUMS REUNION (AUGUST 19-22) - PLEASE SEE INFORMATION ON PAGE 4

General Association • October 1 & 2
 • Silver Lake Conference Center • "The Liberated Heart," a Spiritual Retreat with author Joyce Rupp, OSM. This retreat is a time of deepening and strengthening one's relationship with the Holy One, an invitation to stretch and to grow, to become clearer about one's purpose and journey in life. It will include creative communal prayer, presentations by Joyce, time for personal reflection, and small group dialogue. • Cost: Registration \$40; lodging \$30/night; \$12 each meal. • Contact: Rev. Ron Brown • 125 Sherman St., Hartford, CT 06105; ronb@ctucc.org 860-761-7107, or toll-free: 866-367-2822

Sacred Journey to Turkey • Oct. 25 - Nov. 7 • This Back Bay Mission-hosted travel opportunity combines the chance to experience the sights and culture of the land, along with the ability to meet the people, learn about the work of the church, and participate in a work/study experience. We visit the ancient sites of interest to Christians, including Ephesus, some of the seven churches as mentioned in the Revelation of John, as well as the geographical wonders of Turkey. We also go to the cave dwellings of Cappadocia, the ancient mosques of Istanbul, and the temples and forum that make Turkey a wonder to see. Two days will be facilitated by Betty and Ken Frank, UCC Missionaries in Turkey. Participants will engage in discussion about issues of particular challenge to Turkey, visit work sites and participate in service projects. The cost is \$2,699 per person, double occupancy. Includes airfare, lodging and two meals/day. • Contact: Peter Olsen, trip coordinator, at 24531 Quail Ridge Dr., New Braunfels, TX 78130; 830-608-0578; or • ginger2431@sbcglobal.net

DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRIES

Isn't It All Done Yet?

BY THE REV. NEWELL AND JANE CURTIS

Enough time has gone by to take the damage and the effects of Hurricane Katrina off the daily news and out of the consciousness, and conscience, of many people. The question heard in the disaster volunteer offices in New Orleans, Back Bay Mission and Florida is "Isn't it all done yet?" The answer is NO, and many people feel forgotten as they struggle to rebuild their lives.

We are frequently asked questions about volunteering to help in rebuilding homes in Florida or the Gulf Coast, especially since Katrina made all of us aware of the tremendous need. Questions such as "What can one person do?" "Do I need to have construction skills?" "Do I need to bring tools?" "Where will I stay?" "What will it cost?" and "How do we get started?"

Everyone can make a contribution. A pair of willing hands and a loving heart is all that is needed. Can you paint a wall, put up sheet rock, pull nails, or follow directions from an experienced builder? There is no need to bring any tools. All the necessary tools and equipment are provided.

At all of the UCC-sponsored sites, housing for volunteer groups is provided in churches and/or mobile trailers. Beds, showers, laundry facilities and kitchens are available at all sites. A contribution of \$10/day or \$50/week per volunteer is used to defray the costs of utilities and maintenance.

Interested in becoming a volunteer? The best place to start is in your local church. Talk with your pastor, or with the Mission or Outreach Committee. Put a notice in the church newsletter or Sunday bulletin. Share a mission moment during morning worship. Tell people that you want to go to help and invite others to join you in discussing when and where you want to go. Consider teaming up with another church. It takes planning ahead to make the necessary arrangements for travel and reserving a work week with the on-site coordinator.

We are available to meet with any church group or individual who wants more information. We expect that several others will be available shortly to meet with churches to provide guidance as together we try to assist more people in rebuilding their lives after disasters.

Rev. Newell and Jane Curtis are the Disaster Response Ministry Coordinators for the Connecticut Conference. If you are interested in participating in this ministry, please contact them at 860-399-9584, or by e-mail at njcurtis@comcast.net

Amistad Sets Sail June 21, With Your Help

CORRECTION - After the last issue of ConnTact went to print, the cost of a day's sponsorship of the historic "Atlantic Freedom Tour" of the Amistad changed from \$2,500, as reported, to \$1,000.

Under the banner "Confronting the Past; Transforming the Present," the freedom schooner Amistad sets sail June 21 for England, where it will help commemorate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the former British Empire. It will then travel to Portugal and to Sierra Leone, homeland of the Amistad captives.

Your church can be part of this historic event by sponsoring a day of the trip, between June 21, 2007 and August 23, 2008. \$1,000 reserves your selected Day; \$10,000 reserves your selected Month! It will earn your church special recognition during the historic voyage. Churches can also join together to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Sponsorship arrangements must be made without delay. Please visit www.amistadamerica.org for details.

This is your chance to show support for our enduring commitment to issues of human rights and freedom, justice and peace.

The festivities surrounding Amistad's departure on June 21 will be updated periodically at the same website. As we go to press, there is a reasonable probability that the departure may shift earlier by one hour, so check often.