

# Shalom

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION  
United Church of Christ  
VOLUME XXX, Issue 12, November, 2011

## The Closeness We Wish For

By Kent Ulery  
Interim Associate Conference Minister

Grace to you and peace, from Christ Jesus, the one who is the head of the church. Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into your midst. Our first month serving the southern associations has been full as relationships have begun to form, and as challenges have presented themselves. Truly we are grateful for this opportunity to serve Christ by serving you during the next couple years as the Wisconsin Conference undergoes great transformation.

Transitions are rarely easy, particularly ones as substantial as the Holy Spirit is working in our midst. As I've traveled among you, I've heard expressions of confusion and denial, anger and grief, hesitancy and hope, acceptance and embracing, eagerness and dreaming. We are experiencing the full spectrum of human reaction to change as we wave goodbye to one structure and wave hello to another, as we wave goodbye to one set of leaders and wave hello to someone new. Widespread is the desire for more information, along with complaints about lack of communication. Beneath that is the longing for relationship and the fear of its loss.

A year-and-a-half ago, I stopped the car one day along a lonely Maine road to listen to Garrison Keillor's *The Writer's Almanac*, as he read this poem by Maine's poet laureate, Wesley McNair:

Why,  
when we say goodbye at the end of an evening,  
do we deny we were saying it at all,  
as in "We'll be seeing you,"  
or "I'll call,"  
or "Stop in, somebody's always at home"?

Meanwhile, our friends, telling us the same things,  
go on disappearing beyond the porch light into the space which  
except for a moment here or there  
is always between us no matter what we do.

Waving goodbye, of course, is what happens when the space gets too large for words  
-- a gesture so innocent and lonely it could make a person weep for days.

Think of the hundreds of unknown voyagers in the old, fluttering newsreel  
patting and stroking the growing distance between their nameless ship and the port they are leaving,  
as if to promise "I'll always remember,"  
and, just as urgently, "Always remember me."

Is it loneliness, too, that makes the neighbor down the road

lift two fingers up from his steering wheel as he passes day after day on his way to work  
in the “hello” that turns into “goodbye”?

What can our own raised fingers do for him,  
locked in his masculine purposes and speeding away inside the glass?

How can our waving wipe away the reflex  
so deep in the woman next door  
to smile and wave on her way into her house with the mail  
we'll never know if she is happy or sad or lost?

It can't.

Yet in that moment before she and all the others and we ourselves turn back to our disparate lives,  
how extraordinary it is that we make this small flag with our hands to show the closeness we wish for  
in spite of what pulls us apart again and again:  
the porch light snapping off,  
the car picking its way down the road through the dark.<sup>1</sup>

Much time is spent in the church with matters of theology and ethics, justice and mercy, administration and worship. During times of transitions, whether in the life of the associations or in the lives of our sisters and brothers in the pews, we must also attend to matters of loneliness and relationship – as the poet put it, to “the closeness we wish for.”

I think of St. Paul who, along with proclamation and exhortation, lovingly waved hello and goodbye in his letters:

“To all God’s beloved in Rome...Grace to you and peace...”

To the Corinthians: “I give thanks to my God always for you...”

To the Philippians: “My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown...”

No doubt, today he would write:

“Tim says ‘hi.’ So do Jason and Lou...”

“Please remember me to Julie and Mary...and to Rufus’ mom who was like a real mom to me...”

“Give everyone there a kiss from me...”

Throughout his ministry, Paul waved hello and goodbye with blessings of “Grace and Peace”-- peace being that which creates relationship, grace being that which overcomes loneliness, both through the power of God’s love extended through our love.

May your ministries attend to “the closeness we wish for” in the church and in the culture. And as we move through this difficult time of transition in the Wisconsin Conference’s life, may we wave goodbye with grace, and wave hello with peace, empowered to do so by these gifts:

The grace of our God,  
the love of the Lord,  
and the strength of the Spirit.

*October 2011*

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<sup>1</sup> McNair, Wesley. “Waving Goodbye,” *Lovers of the Lost: New and Selected Poems*. Boston: Black Sparrow Books, May 2010. Downloaded May 18, 2010 from <http://bnreview.barnesandnoble.com/t5/In-the-Margin/Waving-Goodbye/ba-p/2454>. Reformatted for ease in reading aloud.

Join us as we honor

*Rev. Robert Douglas Mutton*

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For Thirty-Five Years Of Service  
*Southwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference*  
*United Church of Christ*  
Saturday, November 19, 2011  
Windsor United Church of Christ  
4434 2nd Street  
Windsor, WI  
Worship Service 2:00 PM  
Dinner will follow the service

Please RSVP by mailing a [registration form](#) with a check  
in the amount of \$25 per person for dinner.  
Mail to: Southwest Association PO Box 435 De Forest, WI 53532



Call 608-846-7880 with questions.



## **Mutton Lectureship**

In honor of Bob Mutton's retirement, and in deepest appreciation for his ministry among us, the Board of Directors of the Conference has authorized the establishment of the Robert Douglas Mutton Lectureship in Theology and the Practice of Ministry. To initiate this lectureship, the Conference has made an initial gift of \$3,500 to establish a fund to underwrite the lectureship. A committee of laity and clergy is being formed to plan for the annual lectures, and the initial lecture will take place in 2012.

The initial goal is to have a minimum of five lectures over the next five years, but the hope is that the lectureship fund will grow to the point that we will be able to fund an annual speaker into the future. You can support this new program by a gift payable to the Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ and clearly mark the gift "MUTTON LECTURESHIP".

Help us honor this exceptional servant of Christ and the Church and help keep alive the rich theological legacy that we have long enjoyed in the Wisconsin Conference.

***See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?***

Lots of new things and some things that have been in existence for years are happening around our association. Clergy gatherings are happening as Development Groups, District meetings Study groups and special interest groups. Churches are doing wonderful and exiting things in their communities. But we may not perceive because we may not hear about them.

Communication has been and will continue to be one of the primary concerns around the Association. We want to stay connected. To do this we need YOU.

Please, would each group, division, gathering (whatever you call yourselves) appoint a reporter to send COPY READY ARTICLES with meeting dates, times, places and a short description of what you are doing. If your congregation or community is doing an event or special ministry that you would like others to know about, would you please take the initiative to send in a short article.

Send them to Lois [larosko@hotmail.com](mailto:larosko@hotmail.com) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. We will try to have them out the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. The Shalom will also be posted on the website <http://swwisconsinucc.org>

Thank you to all who signed up for the e-mail version of the Shalom. The electronic version will be the default version of Shalom. We will only send a paper copy to those who specifically request to have it in that format. Please send your request to Susan Taylor ([staylor@wcucc.org](mailto:staylor@wcucc.org)). or call 608-846-7880.

Included in this issue is list of contacts for the new staff support and Association leadership. If you do not get your inquiries answered, requests handled or just have questions, please contact Rich Fluechtling, the Southwest Association Moderator at 608-347-5178 or [richf@chorus.net](mailto:richf@chorus.net).

## **Calendar**

### November

- 2      Periodic Support Consultations Verona Salem 12 noon
- 3      Verona Development Group Salem UCC 9:30 am
- 3      Executive Committee Madison Plymouth 5:00 pm
- 4      Lake Edge Development Group Madison Lake Edge
- 9      Southwest District Dodgeville 12 noon -2:00 pm Brown Bag Lunch
- 10     Evansville Development Group Evansville Congregational 9:30 am
- 10     Division on Church and Ministry Madison Plymouth 5:30 pm
- 15     South District Evansville 9-11 am
- 17     Verona Development Group Salem UCC 9:30 am
- 18     Lake Edge Development Group Madison Lake Edge
- 30     North District Portage 9-11 am

**SOUTHWEST ASSOCIATION CONTACT LIST**  
**(keep handy for reference)**

Moderator – Richard Fluechtling (608) 271-5599 or [richf@chorus.net](mailto:richf@chorus.net)

Treasurer – Sally Iverson (608) 244-4997 or 249-1537 (W) or [siverson@pcucc.org](mailto:siverson@pcucc.org)

Division on Church & Ministry

Chair: Winton Boyd (608) 271-7212 or [winton@orucc.org](mailto:winton@orucc.org)

Periodic Support Consultations Committee Chair

Jon Schultz (608) 223-9611 or [jonschultz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jonschultz@sbcglobal.net)

Authorized Lay Pastors Committee Chair

Ellen Reuter (608) 222-4094 or [ejreuter@charter.net](mailto:ejreuter@charter.net)

Division on Social Concerns

New chair to be selected soon. Send e-mails to [staylor@wcucc.org](mailto:staylor@wcucc.org)

Division on Christian Education

Chair: Lois Rosko (608) 249-5863 or [larosko@hotmail.com](mailto:larosko@hotmail.com)

Division on Lay Leadership

New chair to be selected soon. Send e-mails to [larosko@hotmail.com](mailto:larosko@hotmail.com)

Division on Partnerships

UEK (German Partnership)

Bill Kapp (608) 643-8387 or [bill\\_kapp@ucc-saukcity.org](mailto:bill_kapp@ucc-saukcity.org)

Holy Land Partnership

Bonnie Van Overbeke (608) 274-1859 or [bonnievano@aol.com](mailto:bonnievano@aol.com)

Prison Ministry

Jerry Hancock (608) 658-6630 or [jhancock@firstcongmadison.org](mailto:jhancock@firstcongmadison.org)

Interim Associate Conference Minister

Kent Ulery cell (608) 630-5376 or [Kulery@wcucc.org](mailto:Kulery@wcucc.org)

Southwest Association United Church of Christ PO Box 435 DeForest, WI 53532 Phone: (608) 846-7880 FAX: (608) 846-7881 Email: <a href="mailto:staylor@wcucc.org">staylor@wcucc.org</a>	Association Website: <a href="http://www.swwaucc.org">www.swwaucc.org</a> Lois Rosko Phone: (608) 249-5863 Rosko Email: <a href="mailto:larosko@hotmail.com">larosko@hotmail.com</a> Conference Website: <a href="http://www.wcucc.org">www.wcucc.org</a> National Website: <a href="http://www.ucc.org">www.ucc.org</a>
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## Clergy Development Groups

The Development Groups are continuing! These are support groups for all UCC clergy active in ministry in the Southwest Association. **The Verona Group** decided to continue to meet on the first and third Thursdays without an outside facilitator. **The Evansville Group** has chosen to work with Ruth Ann Berkholtz as their facilitator and meet the 2nd and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday. **The Lake Edge Group** meets the first and third Friday without an outside facilitator.

There is scholarship money available from the Southwest Association and the Wisconsin Conference to assist clergy to pay for the groups who have chosen to use a facilitator. To apply for those scholarships contact Division on Church & Ministry Chair Winton Boyd (608) 271-7212 or [winton@orucc.org](mailto:winton@orucc.org). Winton returned from sabbatical on October 1.

## Clergy Gatherings (District Meetings)

It seemed quite appropriate to be gathering at Salem for our clergy gathering discussion on Tuesday, Oct 18. We were pushing their generous hospitality, by descending upon them in the midst of their construction chaos. But that is what we are here in this Association. We are still under construction with the possibilities of what will be shining through the clamor and dust of the workers. About 20 clergy gathered, including Kent Ulery, our Interim Associate Conference Minister, and visiting pastor from Plymouth, England Stuart Nixon.

The Focus Statement for the discussion was:

**We want to be an Association where clergy have the tools, the relationships, and the support they need for their professional and personal lives.**

The general agreement was that there still was a need for **geographically oriented clergy gatherings**, similar to the district meetings of the past. Instead of designating them with numbers or by city, it would be more helpful to name them geographically-North District, Southwest District, Central District and South District. It was also emphasized that these District Gatherings were by no means exclusive to those in that geographic area.

In addition to these groups would be special interest gatherings. The current study groups would continue as those who participate in them desire to do so. There were several new groups suggested. Of them two were most popular by the group present.

**Emergent Church** group: Douglas Fauth ([revdefcub@charter.net](mailto:revdefcub@charter.net)) agreed to act as initiator.

A **Worship** Group: Discussion about this group centered on the need for clergy to have a place to worship. No one particular person agreed to spear-head this group, but the Central District may look into organizing it.

A third group was lifted up at the North District meeting:

**Bi-vocational Clergy** Group: Vicki Warren ([kenvic1@gmail.com](mailto:kenvic1@gmail.com)) is interested in gathering clergy who are balancing two or more roles of ministry.

If you are a clergy person in the Southwest Association and did not get a chance to share your input at these meetings we would love to hear from you. Please, e-mail your responses to the questions to Curt Anderson, Church and Ministry Representative ([canderson@firstcongmadison.org](mailto:canderson@firstcongmadison.org)); Todd Lippert Southwest District facilitator ([plymouth@mhtc.net](mailto:plymouth@mhtc.net)); Lois Rosko North District facilitator ([larosko@hotmail.com](mailto:larosko@hotmail.com)); Luke Bocher, South District facilitator ([evansucc@aol.com](mailto:evansucc@aol.com)), Jim Iliff, Central District facilitator ([jiliff@tds.net](mailto:jiliff@tds.net)).

## Book Study Groups

Women Authors Reading: Paul Among the People  
Barth: Church Dogmatics Doctrine of Creation III  
Contemporary Reading Group: A Public Faith  
Calvin Study Group: The Institutes of Christian Religion

## Pulpit Supply List

Churches should be fair and forthright in agreeing upon an honorarium and travel expenses for persons they invite to provide pulpit supply. The Conference Commission on Church and Ministry suggest the minimum of \$125.00 per Sunday. Mileage should be reimbursed at the IRS rate. When a parish has two churches, you should consider a minimum of \$50.00 for the second service.

Ed Beers 271-7329  
Arthur Christofersen 356-6373  
Chris Currier 848-8684  
Jill Sneed Bobholz 381-0412  
Larry Collins 206-4436  
Earl Eckhart 448-2405  
John Eyster 868-3585  
Allan Green 588-3650  
Jerry Hancock 658-6630  
Elizabeth Hazel (926) 275-3094  
Bill McIntyre 424-6285  
Kay Krebs 325-3637  
Carroll Olm (262) 473-3054  
Julie Overman 279-8936  
Doug Pierce 628-1549  
Jon Schultz 223-9611  
Sue Shanks (815) 276-3099  
Lisa Schoenwetter 273-8774  
Julia Weaver 245-9348  
Bill Wineke 513-6146  
Charles Workman 527-5718  
David Yochum (262) 473-7889

### Lay Preachers

Richard Fluechtling 347-5178  
Robert Gwynne 257-5761  
Bill Weiss 743-2025

### Authorized Lay Pastors

Brad Bergin 848-1058  
Terri Wolff (920) 927-5412



Keep for reference or note that you can get the current list at any time  
By e-mail to [staylor@wcucc.org](mailto:staylor@wcucc.org)

## Want to know more about what is happening around the Wisconsin Conference?

Register for the Wisconsin Life newsletter on the website [www.wcucc.com](http://www.wcucc.com) or “friend” them on facebook or twitter.

# Bethlehem Partnership

Dear Southwest Association,

I am a United Methodist pastor living in Madison and I work with an American nonprofit organization called Pilgrims of Ibillin to support the schools founded in Ibillin, Israel by Father Elias Chacour. (You may know of him, because he's won numerous international peace awards over the years, and is now Archbishop of the Melkite Catholic Church in Galilee.) We also have relationships with several other programs in Israel and the West Bank where the purpose is to bring people together to meet and know "the Other" to work for peace, usually in educational settings. It's one of our other partnerships that prompts this email.

I'm writing to you at Bonnie Van Overbeke's suggestion to let the Southwest Association of the UCC know about a wonderful event scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 6, at 7:00pm at First United Methodist Church in Madison (203 Wisconsin Avenue).

Pilgrims of Ibillin is bringing Dalia Eshkenazi Landau to Madison on December 6 for a public presentation. Dalia is the Jewish subject of Sandy Tolan's book [The Lemon Tree](#), and is an excellent presenter about her personal experience and the larger issues affecting prospects for peace between Israel and Palestine. The evening will simply be a presentation by Dalia and then a moderated Q&A time.

I hope the Southwest Association can participate by encouraging people to attend, or by signing on as an endorser or a co-sponsor and being willing to have the Association's name on publicity. We're inviting sponsors to contribute \$100 or whatever they're able, to help cover the expenses of bringing Dalia to Madison. We'd like to list names on publicity for those who want that. So far the South Central Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Bethlehem Partnership of Memorial United Church of Christ, The Crossing Campus Ministry, and First United Methodist are sponsoring along with Pilgrims of Ibillin. Invitations are also out to Christ Presbyterian Church, the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Church, and a local synagogue. I'm open to other suggestions if you have any.

We're inviting sponsors to an early dinner with Dalia on December 6 -- at 5pm (Dutch-treat, unfortunately). It will be held either at The Edgewater or The Concourse to facilitate getting quickly to the church for the program at 7.

I'd love to talk about this with you in person. Feel free to call me at either my home/office phone, [608-241-9281](tel:608-241-9281), or my cell at [608-235-1046](tel:608-235-1046). Or just respond to this email.

Thanks so much,

Joan

--

**Joan Deming**

Pilgrims of Ibillin Development Director

1541 Comanche Glen

Madison, WI 53704

Home/office [608-241-9281](tel:608-241-9281)

<http://www.pilgrimsOfIbillin.org>

## **Division on Social Concerns**

The Social Concerns Committee organized a weekend of interfaith dialogue. The dialogue took place in October and was well attended. People from three Madison UCC congregations (Orchard Ridge UCC, Lake Edge UCC and Memorial UCC ) participated in two sessions of dialogue with members of the Islamic Center of Madison. What a positive experience it was, very informative and enlightening! The highlight, perhaps, was a renewed awareness that fear of the “Other” is vastly diminished when people actually sit down and become acquainted with one another, hear one another’s stories, and identify with one another’s common life experiences. (The complete article written by Ken Pennings can be found in Orchard Ridge’s October issue of their newsletter, issue 1, titled Christian/Muslim Dialogue.)

The social concerns committee encourages any church in the S/W conference to submit requests for grant money to the Social Concerns Committee, via email, and send the request to Susan Taylor ([staylor@wcucc.org](mailto:staylor@wcucc.org)) Susan will forward the request to the committee. Requests should be sent NO LATTER then the last week of the preceding month, prior to the committee meeting. The committee meets the 3rd Thursday of every month (No mtg in Dec.) The request also should be for mission work that will be done in 2012.

TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, YOUR PROPOSAL MUST INCLUDE:

1 THRU 8

Thank you for placing this info into the Shalom  
Mary Holtshopple

To apply for a grant, your proposal must include:

- 1) What is the nature of the mission project and how will it be conducted?
- 2) What is the timeline for the project?
- 3) What are the anticipated outcomes?
- 4) What are the anticipated expenses?
- 5) What is the amount requested
- 6) What other sources of funding if any, are being pursued
- 7) Is this a one-time or an ongoing project?
- 8) What does your local church contribute to the project?

## KETTLEWOOD RETREATS    REV. HOLLY W. WHITCOMB, DIRECTOR

*Friday, December 2, 2011*

*9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.*

### I WONDER AS I WANDER: JOURNEY AND PILGRIMAGE

During Christmas and Epiphany we recall the Magi's pilgrimage to honor the Christ Child. This Advent we will reflect on journey/ pilgrimage and its vast and exciting implications for our spiritual growth. Where is God inviting you to journey? Is it outside yourself? Is it inside yourself? What support do you need? We will reflect on Jesus's own life as inspiration as we examine themes of attention, discovery, hardship, arriving home, and the art of walking slowly. Our special guest, master photographer Rick Vollbrecht, will share an exquisite visual meditation. Join us as we thoughtfully prepare for this rich season.

Our leader: Rev. Holly Whitcomb is a UCC minister, spiritual director, and author.

*Kettlewood Retreats invites you to this Advent retreat at Cedar Valley. Come join us in the countryside of the Kettle Moraine on 100 spectacular acres (an outdoor labyrinth too!) near West Bend. The noon meal is included.*

*To register for this retreat, please write a check for \$50.00 to Rev. Holly Whitcomb and send it to: 2095 Elm Tree Ct., Elm Grove, WI 53122. Include your name, address, and phone number(s). Please register as soon as you can. Upon receipt of your registration, you will receive a map. For more information, call (262) 784-5593. <http://www.kettlewoodretreats.com>*

## **UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns National Gathering**

The National Gathering was held June 27-30 in Tampa with the theme ImaginACTion. It was a time to look forward to a future so much changed from its 39 year history. Now is a time when the Open and Affirming movement has passed 950 ONA congregations and is quite fully integrated in the national setting of the UCC. Presenters spoke of the hard work and success and raise issues to live into the future which included keeping the momentum of the ONA going, greater connection with racial/ethnic communities, more involvement of youth and young adults, and addressing the needs of aging LGBT persons as they move into retirement.

The annual business meeting received reports of challenges of the staff transitions and diminished financial resources. A total new Leadership Team was elected to re-energize The Coalition. Rich Fluechtling completed serving for 11 years as treasurer and accountant.