

November 2010

The Tie That Binds

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Cadillac, Michigan

PASTOR REYNOLDS' RAP

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to invite you to join in a journey of congregational self-discovery.

I understand that existentialism is a hot topic in downtown Cadillac lately, but do you ever wonder why we--this church--exist? What makes us a church? What our unique gifts and strengths are? Who our equally unique neighbors [in need] are? Where we're headed, and what exactly God is calling us to do and to be at this particular moment in time? Just as we as individuals must make meaning in our lives, so too must faith communities identify the "whys" of our existences in order to move forward and do our ministries in meaningful and effective ways. Answering these big-picture questions in turn enables us to articulate congregational dreams and priorities, short- and long-term goals and objectives, and finally to structure our lives together, craft relevant job descriptions and ministry evaluation tools.

These and more are the aims of a church visioning process. On **Thursday, November 18** from **6-8 pm**, the **Rev. Cheryl Burke** of the UCC Michigan Conference will join us to kick off and facilitate just such a process for our church family and to introduce us to the concept of appreciative inquiry. To ensure that the vision we craft is representative of the congregation, our hope is that as many people as possible will participate. If this date is problematic for you, please know that follow-up meetings will provide additional opportunities for input and involvement.

Please do join us in Fellowship Hall for soup, sandwiches, and the unfolding of a shared, compelling vision for our church's future direction!

Grace and Peace to each one of you,
Pastor Carol

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Please note that Pastor Carol will be on vacation November 22-29.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NOVEMBER 2010

November 7 Faith	tbd (Laity Sunday)	Hold on to
November 14 Possibilities	Isaiah 65:17-25	Infinite

November 21
November 28
Waiting

Psalm 100, Philippians 4:4-9
tbd (Pastor on Vacation)

Thanks Giving
Ready and

WORSHIP

Laity Sunday

November 7 is designated Laity Sunday on the UCC church calendar. To celebrate that occasion, we are pleased to welcome **Sara [edit]** into the pulpit to talk about her recent experiences in Nepal. Afterwards we will share food and fellowship with the **Re-Member mission trip volunteers** in Fellowship Hall. If you have ideas for the lay-led worship service or are interested in participating, please contact Pastor Carol.

Hanging of the Greens

Please join us on **November 28** for an abbreviated worship service followed by a church holiday decorating party to celebrate the first Sunday of Advent.

Taizé

The ecumenical Taizé worship service now held at First Presbyterian will take a sabbatical for the months of November and December. Please join us when we resume on Wednesday, January 26.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The Board met on Wednesday, October 13, 2010. [edit] The Board discussed a number of things, including the possibility of continuing the Supper with Friends gatherings that so many enjoyed this past spring. The Board is also looking at reviewing the By-Laws and proposing changes in them to present to the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January. **Penny Phelps** showed the notebooks [which] outline various church duties, responsibilities and areas – such as a notebook that entails all the kitchen duties and considerations – as well as instruction on how to make coffee and light the ovens! These very detailed books have been long needed. Thanks to those who spent so much time and effort on them.

FUN!

Harvest Dinner

Penny Phelps

Umm – as soon as I write the words, I can catch a whiff of the wonderful aromas coming from Fellowship Hall! November 14th is the day, and after worship we will follow our noses downstairs for our annual celebration.

In order for us to plan, we need to have an idea of numbers, so for the next two Sundays there will be sign-up sheets at the back of the sanctuary. One sheet is for attendance – just let us know how many family members and friends you will be bringing. The other is to indicate what you plan to bring. Think of all those recipes that have caught your eye – which one would you like to share with us all? As in the past, we will buy and roast all the turkeys together, so if you want to be a turkey provider, let **Penny Phelps** or **Karma [edit]** know.

MISSIONS

Our Mission Target for November: Project Christmas/Salvation Army Penny Phelps

According to the headlines and the economic statistics, things are improving, but it's hard to see much evidence in northern Michigan. Food banks are delivering supplies as fast as they come in, the Shepherd's Table is serving more meals than ever, and individual churches like ours are getting more and more requests for money for gas or heat or rent. Meanwhile, each of us takes a closer look at the budget to see where we can make cuts, knowing that higher utility bills are on their way. What can we do?

That's where the multiplier factor comes in! Separately, our donations of a dollar or two look pretty meager, but if each family in the church gave a dollar, and if every church in our community did likewise, Project Christmas and the Salvation Army would be overwhelmed with funds and goods that they could distribute to those in need. Can you commit to giving up some small treat? A cup of coffee? A newspaper or magazine? Set that money aside and add it to our mission fund for the month of November and let's see what a difference we can make.

And don't forget.... Project Christmas is counting on us to provide new children's books when they create Christmas for over 1200 families on **December 11**. The table is already set up at the back of the sanctuary, so you can bring in books any time. If you want to help at Project Christmas, see **Karma [edit]**.

Re-Member

The **Re-Member mission trip participants** have returned from Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and are eager to share their experiences with us! Please join us after worship on **November 7** for an informal presentation and a sampling of foods served on the trip.

From the American Red Cross

Dear Friends-

Thank you for your generous donations of cookies for our recent blood drive. They were appreciated and enjoyed by all!

Sincerely
[edit]

STEWARDSHIP

Don't forget The Tower Fund!

Penny Phelps

Hmmm – doesn't that sound like a mutual fund or annuity just itching to get your money? Well, don't worry, it isn't. If you remember, **Jack [edit]** explained to us at the semi-annual meeting in September that the basic work of repairing and painting the tower is finished, and what remains is to replace the wiring and install new lights. Jack said that the work would be done by our stalwart volunteers, but that the materials would cost in excess of \$500. That's on top of the extra cost of new louvers and other fix-ups that exceeded the original painting estimate. Knowing how folks had stepped up to the plate when we needed to replace the piano and other projects, he suggested a "Tower Fund" to cover the costs without breaking the budget. Already some members have pledged

to the fund and over \$450 has been received. If you find that this is a project that you can see and appreciate, please contribute, and be sure to mark your donation for The Tower Fund.

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army aims to provide Thanksgiving baskets to over 300 needy families this year. If you would like to donate food for the baskets (by **November 16**) or assist with packing the baskets on **November 22**, [edit]

A NOTE FROM UCC GENERAL MINISTER & PRESIDENT GEOFFREY BLACK

Dear Friends,

With gratitude and joy, we share the good news that your church is a "Five for Five" congregation of the United Church of Christ. Your Conference has reported that in 2009 you contributed to Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support and also received the four special mission offerings of our denomination: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and The Christmas Fund. Thus, you are a leadership church in the United Church of Christ, and we want to recognize your faithful generosity as well as the breadth of your vision for ministry.

Through your support of the wider mission of the church, you participate actively in an array of ministries, offering a compassionate and effective response to human suffering caused by disaster, famine, and war; addressing the justice issue of spiritual homelessness by planting and nurturing United Church of Christ congregations where there are none, renewing existing churches to even greater depths of hospitality and hope, and making it possible for our youth to participate in the life of the church at regional and other youth events; dreaming of a different and better world that is more just, and then working, project by project, witness by witness, to bring it to reality; and keeping the covenant made with those who have served the church faithfully for many years, meeting the needs of retired pastors and their spouses who often live on very little.

You also support the structure that makes all of this ministry - and so much more - possible: through our Conference and national settings: helping churches and pastors to "find" one another through the search and call process, spreading the good of the United Church of Christ through our websites, sending missionaries overseas, creating programs to support the ministry of lay and ordained Women, nurturing the worship life of our congregations both large and small, inspiring generosity in our church members, growing each day into a more multiracial and multicultural church, to name only a few examples.

Once again, we thank you for your faithful generosity and your commitment to the gospel as it is lived out in the United Church of Christ.

Blessings and thanks,
Rev. Geoffrey A. Black
General Minister and President

