



Southwest Conference
United Church of Christ

Embodying God's
unconditional justice and love ...

Building Relationships - Deepening Spirituality - Extending Hospitality

Serving Arizona, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas

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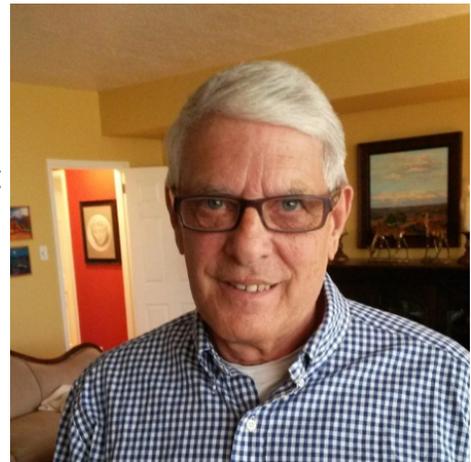
In the Loop with the Southwest Conference UCC October 2015

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Dear Friends of the Southwest Conference,

Lee's Message

As I travel and meet with church councils, search and call committees, clergy and laity in our Southwest Conference ministry settings, I experience and feel excitement, strength, and love for the United Church of Christ. We not only say we welcome those who are not welcome elsewhere, we actually do welcome all no matter who or where they are on life's journeys. I am so proud of be a part of who and what we are in a world where inclusion, on almost every level, is rare.



It is into this setting we welcome the Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons as our Designated Conference Minister who will begin his ministry among us on January 1, 2016. I can't wait for all of you to meet him and to get to know him. He brings years of pastoral experience, wisdom, humor, creativity, theological perspectives for today's church, and an authentic passion for social justice.

I continue to be honored to be your Acting Conference Minister during this transition time. My last day will be December 31st. I commute between Albuquerque and Phoenix and find it an easier task than I thought it might be. Our technology age makes this possible of course. Please do not hesitate to contact the Conference office to let anyone of us on staff know how we can best serve you and your ministry setting.

Blessings,

Lee

Lessons in Interdependence from unlikely sources

by Cindy Walley, Encanto Community Church, Phoenix

Recently I was listening to an episode of This American Life that told the story of a "car plant in Fremont, California, that might have saved the U.S. car industry. In 1984, General Motors and Toyota opened NUMMI (New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc.) as a joint venture. Toyota showed GM the secrets of its production system: How it made cars of much higher quality and much lower cost than GM achieved."

To train employees on the Toyota production system, GM autoworkers were flown to a Toyota plant in Japan. There they encountered a teamwork system of production. The Toyota model paired line workers, allowing for greater efficiency due largely to the support each worker felt from his or her partner. They also encouraged workers of varying management levels to work together to solve problems even allowing line workers to "stop the line" if they deemed it necessary to correct an error.



As one would expect, the GM workers were initially resistant to many of Toyota's procedures, but as they spent time building automobiles with their Toyota counterparts, they grew to see the value of interdependence and the disadvantages of the "every man for himself" structure to which they had become accustomed. When they returned to the United States, they were able to implement some of their newfound modifications, but much of the teamwork model was an uncomfortable stretch for American manufacturing.

It is difficult to depend on (or be depended on by) each other. If it were easy, maybe we would be reading monthly articles on how our mutual kinship and progress is overflowing into our communities and our world.

National News

UCC Supports Transgender Homecoming Queen

UCC supporters, including General Minister and President, the Rev. John Dorhauer, joined students and community members in a rally in Kansas City, Mo., to show love and support for Oak Park High School's transgender homecoming queen, Landon Patterson, effectively countering a hateful protest by Westboro Baptist Church.

Landon Patterson, named her school's first transgender homecoming queen on Sept. 12 by

her courageous classmates, was shown a lot of love by the young people on Thursday, Oct. 1, who confronted Westboro's hate speech.

About a dozen high school students walked across the intersection outside the school where the Westboro crowd gathered, outnumbered them, and drove them away. They were joined in an impromptu rally by John Dorhauer, other members of the faith community, as well as representatives of the Kansas City Stop Violence Coalition.

[Click here](#) to read the entire article and see the video!

An Historic Agreement

The United Church of Christ and the Boy Scouts of America have renewed their formal relationship with a document that affirms the recently-adopted BSA resolution that removed the restriction on gay adult leaders and employees, and formally states that UCC congregations chartering BSA units can conduct scouting programs according to their own values of inclusion and extravagant welcome for all. [Read more...](#)

Healing Earth

"Our precious planet is dying. Whatever has before kept us apart must now be cast aside," Dorhauer told the crowd gathered for the first session of "Coming Together in Faith on Climate," a two-day event in Washington, D.C. "We who broker in hope, who stay attuned to the voice and movement of the sacred among us, who find light in the darkness must unite a single movement and a common cause."

Dorhauer's speech was one of several inspirational messages from U.S. faith leaders that, along with songs and poetry, was intent on connecting faith and climate leaders and build momentum for action. [See the article here...](#)

Faith Community Responds to Anti-Immigration

As a nation, we must come together ... by building a country that models inclusion and understanding--not just on immigration, but on race relations in our country overall. We must remember that our faith calls us to love our neighbor, welcome the stranger, and stand in solidarity with the vulnerable, especially those who are excluded or marginalized for their race, nationality or immigration status.

Read [John Dorhauer's full article](#) here.

Act on Climate Arizona

Arizona Faith Network Earth Care Commission, under the leadership of Sarah King, invites you to join the event "Act on Climate Arizona" on Nov. 7th from 9am-11am at Civic Space

Park in downtown Phoenix .



RSVP at <http://actonclimateaz.eventbrite.com>

National Youth Event

Several churches (Beatitudes, Scottsdale, COGS for now) are putting groups together for NYE. Let me know if your church is doing so. If I have youth interested in going, but no church coordinating, I'll match them with another church in the area. The SWC has some scholarship money available, but we hope churches will fundraise to cover the bulk of the cost for their attendees. But--call me. We don't want any child to miss the event because of money. Pass the word to your youth! ~~ Holly Herman, SWC Office Manager



Dates: **July 26-30, 2016**

Location: **Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, in Buena Vista, Florida**

Cost: \$549 per person, double occupancy.

Cost includes:

- 5 days and 4 nights' hotel accommodations, including free wi-fi
- Transportation to and from the airport and parks
- 8 meals: Tuesday dinner, all meals Wednesday and Thursday, breakfast Saturday. (Meals on Friday are not included since that is the fellowship day at the parks for all attendees.)
- A pass to the Disney parks

Registration: Opens January 6, 2016

What's New:

- For the first time, NYE will be open to both UCC and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) youth
- Family members of youth participants are invited to NYE. Worship services, service projects, meals, and fellowship day in the park are open to family members. The cost for each family member is the same low rate of \$549 per person, double occupancy.

Service Projects:

- Coordinated through United Way, projects will include outreach with homeless persons and environmental clean-up efforts
- Day-long, social justice immersion projects are being coordinated by Edith Rasell, UCC Minister for Economic Justice, and will include visiting the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, among others.
- Locks of Love-attendees are encouraged to start growing out their hair now for donation to Locks of Love, which provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

Program:

- In addition to workshops at the resort, youth will have the opportunity to participate in a special Disney Youth Education Series (Disney YES) at Epcot Center, which has been designed to reflect UCC/Disciples principles and values. [More programming information to come soon.]

Questions? Contact the NYE Team:

- Lee Foley-Administrator foleyl@ucc.org
- Valerie Smith-Associate Administrator smithv@ucc.org
- Tina Villa-Director of Communications villac@ucc.org
- Waltrina Middleton-Associate for NYE Programing middletonw@ucc.org

News from the Churches

Send YOUR church news to Sheri Slaybaugh, SWC Office, to share In the Loop.

Shadow Rock, Phoenix

FABRIC RECYCLE DRIVE begins October 18th

Clean out your closets! Shadow Rock Preschool is holding their semi-annual Soft Goods Recycle Drive! Bring fabric of ANY kind in ANY condition on Sunday, October 18th, through Thursday the 22nd. We really mean ANY condition - rips, tears, stains are all ok! Any donations that are not resellable will be broken down to their fibers, cleaned, and recycled. The preschool is paid per pound collected, so they appreciate your contributions.

Scottsdale Congregational Church

Scottsdale UCC is looking for donations for I HAVE A NAME project--an exhibit of photographs by Jon Linton of the homeless on the streets of Phoenix. They are looking to collect \$500 to frame the photos and stories in this exhibit. Jon will then give the exhibit to Scottsdale UCC and they would agree to let the exhibit travel around to other UCC churches that would be interested in displaying it as part of their Justice ministry to the homeless.

For more information about the artist and this project, click on

<http://www.ihaveaname.org/>. If you would like to contribute to this project, please contact Susan Unmacht, 480-747-7614.

Desert Garden, Sun City

This year Desert Garden Church reaches two milestones in its service to the greater West Valley community: 35 years as an established United Church of Christ Congregation and the 25th anniversary of the installation of our Rogers organ.

These milestones will be celebrated at Desert Garden Church on Sunday, October 25, 2015. We invite all members past and present, friends and visitors to share in a morning of festive music and sharing of community outreach.

Casas Adobes Congregational Church, Tucson

Casas Adobes is hosting the Third Annual Morris B. Ewing Memorial Golf Outing on October 30th at SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club. A portion of revenue from the event supports the Youth Fund of the Southwest Conference United Church of Christ. Click [here](#) for additional details and [here for the flyer](#).

Church of the Beatitudes, Phoenix

Please join us on Sunday, January 24th, when Dr. Harvey Cox, Hollis Research Professor

at Harvard Divinity School, will be preaching the 9 am worship service at Church of the Beatitudes. Dr. Cox is a permanent theologian and scholar on the interaction of religion, culture and politics. Some of his many written works include *When Jesus Came to Harvard: Making Moral Decisions Today*, *The Future of Faith*, and *Religion in the Secular City*. Click here to watch Dr. Cox discuss his text "The Future of Faith."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmSFUN2qNZw>

United Church of Angel Fire, NM

The Firewood Angels cut, stack and deliver firewood to needy folks in the Moreno Valley. Preparations for Firewood Angels begin during the summer. This year three different groups of helpers from the Lutheran Church helped UCAF members to move massive quantities of logs from a donor in Hidden Lake. This amounted to about \$3500 that needy folks did not have to spend. With all the help, we were able to supply the firewood needs of all our clients throughout the winter. This summer the Firewood Angels have cut, split and stacked 32 cords of wood and are well ahead of the game! Preparations are now underway to deliver wood to the needy before the first snow falls.

Rincon Congregational Church, Tucson

Rincon is hosting an event-filled weekend promoting **Sacred Conversations On Race: Exploring Whiteness**, October 23-25. [Click here for details.](#)

Join us for a special movie event, the groundbreaking documentary about the epidemic of rape in the military, "The Invisible War," November 20th at Rincon. [Click here for the flyer!](#)

The Good Shepherd UCC, Sahuarita

The Good Shepherd United Church of Christ in Sahuarita will welcome Dr. Larry L. Rasmussen, Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, NYC and Nautilus Book Award for 2014 for Earth-honoring Faith, on November 20th and 21st. He will be joining us for a **CREATION JUSTICE WEEKEND**. For more information, [click here](#).

Rebel & Divine OWL Retreat

A young adult fall retreat will be held November 6-8, 2015, at Chapel Rock Camp in Prescott, AZ. This is an opportunity for young adults to explore their values around sexuality using the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program.

First Congregational Church, Phoenix

Join the inaugural "First at First" event on the First Friday in November at First Congregation United Church of Christ. The event will run from 6-10 PM and focus on the Southwest Conference. There will be live entertainment, market vendors, and ways to

connect with other churches in the conference! We are still looking for artists and vendors. If you are interested, please email nelson@phoenixucc.org . We invite your congregation to send a delegation to set up a table and talk about your church for the other attendees!

For more information, contact Nelson Kristoffer Mendoza at 602.509.5581 mobile or email nelsonkristoffer@outlook.com

Sacred Space, Tucson

Sacred Space executive director Teresa Cowan Jones will co-present Capturing the Stories of a Compassionate City and Community at the 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions, the oldest, the largest, and the most inclusive gathering of people of all faith and traditions.

[Click here](#) to read more.

First Samoan Congregational Christian Church, Phoenix

Sina Ahsoon, secretary of First Samoan Congregational Christian Church in AZ, recently attended a meeting of the Church Building and Loan Fund (CBLF), a part of our national setting that works with building loans to new and young congregations. Sina spoke to other new church representatives about how CBLF not only granted them a loan to purchase their building, but, when they ran into difficulties, worked with them to save their building.



Church World Service Position

Church World Service has a position available as a Policy Advocate:

Policy Advocate

Reports to: Director of Policy and Advocacy

Team: Immigration and Refugee Program (IRP+)

Location: Washington, D.C.

Grade: 5

Starting salary: \$45,000 to \$47,500

Status: Exempt, Non-Bargaining Unit

Deadline: October 19, 2015

Church World Service (CWS) is a not-for-profit organization working to eradicate hunger

and poverty and to promote peace and justice around the world. CWS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or veteran status in employment or in the provision of services.

[Click here](#) for more info.

Music Mania at First Congregational Phoenix, October 25, 3 PM



Phoenix First Congregational Church is sponsoring Music Mania in support of the SWC ministry. Come and enjoy the music and some attendees from last year that are new participants this year! It really is a fun event - very laid back.

[Click here for the flyer!](#)

Thanksgiving Alive 2015!

Thanksgiving Alive is alive! Check out this REALLY cool [video](#).

It will take place at Church of the Beatitudes in Phoenix from the Friday after Thanksgiving through that Sunday morning worship, Nov. 27-29. The **big changes** for this year are that Young Adults and Disciples of Christ youth are also invited to participate.

Information and registration forms are now available on the SWC website: uccswc.org.

New Video Library available on SWC Website

The Center for Progressive Renewal made or repurposed a series of videos for our conference, and they are available for use by SWC leaders (pastors, prospective church planters, administrators, youth leaders, Sunday School and Adult Ed. Teachers). These videos cover a wide variety of topics that will be of interest to many in your congregations. Per our agreement with CPR, these videos can only be shared with SWC members (clergy, lay members), so to access them, you will need to hit the link on the website which will send an email to the SWC office, or send an email to the SWC directly. The office will send you the link and password. So please, go to www.uccswc.org, to see a description of each video:

Characteristics of Church Planters

Church Planting at 30K Feet

Church Renewal 1.0: Conflict and Change: Sacred Cows and Golden Calves.

Planning as part of Mission and Vision

Church Funding Practices

Energizing Youth Ministry

Room in the Inn: Getting Ready for Newcomers at Christmastime or Anytime.

Cancel your Board Meeting and Take a Walk

Outside the Box Children's Faith Formation

Creativity in Worship: Practical, cheap and fun ideas for all of us.

Exploring Trendlines: The Cloud

What is a Sharing Economy?

What does a Sharing Economy Look Like?

Examining the Trendlines with John Dorhauer-the Local Food Movement.

Your OCWM \$\$ at work -- Neighbors in Need (NIN)

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry(CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries(JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants.

Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. Funding is provided through donations to the Neighbors in Need offering.

THANK YOU Rincon, Church of the Painted Hills, Beatitudes, Scottsdale Congregational, and other SWC Churches for supporting this important mission of the SWC, and for informing your members of the impact of our missions!

All Saints Retreat

The Community of Aidan and Hilda cordially invites you to

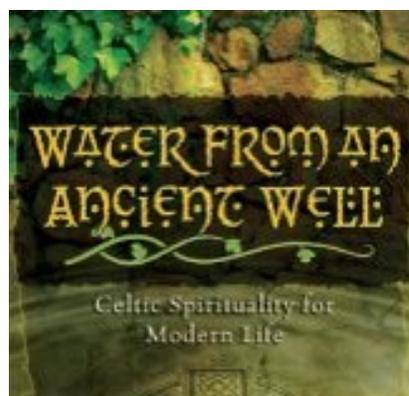
Keeping Back the Darkness:

A Samhain-All Saints Retreat

October 30-November 1, 2015

at the Madonna Retreat & Conference Center, Albuquerque, NM

Featuring **Kenneth McIntosh**,
a writer, educator and spiritual mentor.



[Click here for flyer!](#)

Have You Checked out the SWC Blog?

Check it out at www.southwestconferenceblog.org.

Enjoy a wide spectrum of topics (climate change, spiritual direction, transgender, happiness, parenting, just to name a few) from an every changing variety of contributors.

Click here to read the [latest posts!](#)

If you're on Facebook, "like" the SWC Facebook page, and click "Get Notifications" under the Like button so you won't miss a single post.

Jazz Hymnbook

Rev. Cliff Aerie is working on a new project - the creation of a jazz hymnbook.

Worship in a New Key is a collaborative effort with his friend, Tim Osiek who is the Minister of Music at St. John UCC in the St. Louis area.

[Click here](#) for the basic information about volume 1.

Field Advisor Needed

In preparation to accept a call in the wider church, I have embarked on a doctorate in Congregational Health. My working research question is, **"what makes faith communities matter?"** To explore this question, defend the results and make recommendations to the SW Conference on how these results can be used in the incarnation of a "Still Speaking God," I need a "professor in the field," a person who has a passion for keeping the church relevant for all people in all seasons.



If you can commit to work with me for 18 months, accept a small (very small) stipend and be a member of my Doctoral Committee for my oral presentation in 2017, please contact me.

Rev. Alberta Wallace, MSW, M.Div
Doctoral student at Central Baptist Theological Seminary
albertawallace@hotmail.com



The next Lay Academy will be November 13-14, 2016.

Rev. Rock Fremont will take us on a tour of the Abrahamic faiths for his session *"In The Beginning... From Zoroaster to Abraham,"* a field-trip originating in Scottsdale, AZ that will take us from the church, to the synagogue, to the mosque, and beyond.

Lay Academy is open to all lay people. Contact Lay Academy Coordinator Rev. Rock Fremont for more information or visit the website, www.LayAcademy.org.

"Plug In to" your Passion

The Faith Formation Team of Local Church Ministries is offering an on-line opportunity for United Church of Christ churches to enter into a panel discussion on

Creating Sacred Space

for worship. The event will stream live at 11 AM (EDT) on October 27, 2015 from the Amistad Chapel at the Church House in Cleveland, Ohio at http://www.ucc.org/creating_sacred_space.

For more info, please contact Rev. Ivy Beckwith at atbeckwithi@ucc.org.

Save the Date - SW Conference Social Media Workshop

Mark your calendars! New date for this workshop. Many of you were interested when we scheduled this last fall, but it had to be postponed. Plan to attend now.

Social Media Workshop, Feb. 20, 2016, 10am-4pm, at the SWC office

Send someone from your church to learn how to enhance your communications with a variety of Social Media.

2015 - 2016 Calendar of Events

October- November

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|-----------|--|
| Oct 24 | Mission Planning Board, SWC office, 10 am - 4 pm |
| Oct 24-25 | Disciples of Christ youth retreat, UCC youth invited |
| Oct 25 | Music Mania, First Cong, Phoenix, 3 pm |
| Nov 5 | Second POMO worship experience, SWC office, 7 pm |
| Nov 9-11 | Clergy Retreat, Redemptorist Center, Tucson |
| Nov 11 | COCAM B, SWC office, 12 Noon to 3:30 pm |
| Nov 12 | COCAM A, SWC office, 10 am - 2:30 pm |
| Nov 13-14 | Lay Academy, Scottsdale, AZ |
| Nov 27-29 | Thanksgiving Alive, Church of the Beatitudes |

2016

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| Jan 1 | Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons begins as SWC Designated Conference Minister |
| Feb 20 | Social Media Workshop, SWC office, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm |
| April 22-23 | SWC Annual Meeting, Shadow Rock UCC, Phoenix |
| June 19-24 | All Summer Youth Camps, Emmanuel Pines, Prescott |
| July 26-30 | National Youth Event |

This communication is made possible by your contributions to **Our Church's Wider Mission.**

Southwest Conference United Church of Christ