

WORSHIP



Community Of Hope, UCC

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!

Worship Services | Every Sunday
at 6:00pm



Rev. Bob Lawrence, Pastor

Dear Companions,

As I write this, we are on the verge of moving from the Church's season of Epiphany into the period of Lent. Epiphany is intended to draw our attention to the various ways in which God is made known in our lives. Lent is meant to help us do the work of personal preparation and empowerment for our responses to the revelations of God and the work of God's kin-dom.

During Epiphany, we focused on a Call to Renewal that was meant to help us renew our commitments to the different missions of Community of Hope. We kept returning to the question, "What is the *passion* of Community of Hope?" or, "What is Community of Hope's contribution to making the kin-dom a reality in Tulsa and other communities?" During Lent, we will shift our focus to the personal spirituality that is necessary as we seek to **BE** the change we envision in the world.

One of the questions we will attempt to answer together during this period of personal reflection and empowerment is, "What makes Community of Hope different from a community-based service organization such as the United Way or Tulsa CARES?" The answer lies in our understanding of the first word of our name: community. As Terry Bohannon eloquently pointed out during our recent Community Meeting, we all have the option to support the various community-based service organizations around us. What makes our support of Community of Hope different is the work we do on building, creating, nurturing, and sustaining community. Or, as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King called it, "the beloved community." As a community during Lent, we will be focusing on and encouraging one another in the personal work and centering that we need in order to do the work of our passion.

The answers to the various questions that arise along these lines include the answer to the question many ask, "I can worship God anywhere. Why do I have to come to church?" If your only goal is to worship God, then it is true that you don't have to come to church to do so. (I would hope, though, that you are spending time in worship of the various aspects of God in your life *every day*, not only during our worship times.) What Community of Hope offers, in addition to some time dedicated to worshipping God, is the ability to do the really difficult work of *being* community for one another. Whether it is singing together as a community, expressing, praying for, and acting on the needs of those in our community, or participating in breaking bread together, what we do Sunday evenings (and Tuesday and Thursday evenings during Lent) is learn from and support one another in our individual work of bringing the kin-dom of God to reality.

I invite you to join us for the various activities of Lent as we seek to be "the beloved community" for one another.



Sunday, March 7
Amistad Sunday
Week of Prayer For the
Healing of Aids
"A Change of Heart in the
Night"
(*Luke 13:1-9*)

Sunday, March 14
"Lavish Forgiveness in
the Night"
(*Luke 15 1-3, 11b-32*)

Sunday, March 21
"A New Path in the
Night"
(*Isaiah 43:16-21*)

Sunday, March 28 Palm
Sunday "Cheering in the
Night"
(*Luke 19:28-40*)

All Month
Every Thursday at 6pm
Taize Service

TABLES-TO-GO MINISTRY

We made it through our first delivery of "Tables to Go!" Thank you to all the teams who participated and I want to personally express my gratitude for your patience while those of us who are new to this ministry continue to attack our learning curve in how to accomplish this ministry as efficiently as possible.

I don't want anyone to think we were deliberately trying to rush into our Lenten theme of "Into the Night" by any confusion! Just chalk up any chaos or bewilderment to your leaders being brand new at this ministry, and hope-

fully we will be more focused and organized this time around! Even so, we delivered all the "Tables-to-Go" baskets this first month without any major incident so our mission was accomplished.

By the time you read this, we will have successfully delivered "Tables-to-Go" to our friends again, and I have faith it will run more smoothly this time around. Our next delivery date is March 20th, and we appreciate your continued support in this very important ministry.

HAITI UPDATE

The leaders of our two main UCC and Disciples partners in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Patrick and Francoise Viller and Polycarpe Joseph are safe, as well as our missionary family serving in Haiti, Kim and Patrick Bentrott along with their son Solomon. The Bentrott's returned to the United States on Saturday, January 23. Please visit the Bentrott's blog for updated information:
<http://www.kimandpatrick.blogspot.com/>

Patrick Villier is a member of the Common Global Ministries Board (CGMB) and the president of the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti (CONASPEH), a grassroots movement of 6,000 plus congregations and our largest partner in Haiti for almost three decades. The six story CONASPEH headquarters building which houses the school, seminary and nursing institute has been flattened by the earthquake. 20 or so of the nursing students were tragically trapped inside.



WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

GIVE immediate financial assistance to victims to be used for food, clothing, shelter and basic needs by making a secure online donation right now. **Donations are now tax deductible for 2009.**

TEXT LOVE to 25383 to have a \$10 donation added to your phone bill. Share this number with your offline friends and congregation.

SHARE your thoughts, prayers, resources and news with your church family on myUCC. We have created a group where you can share your fundraising efforts and ideas with other congregations.

TAKE ACTION by writing a letter to Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner advocating the cancellation of Haiti's remaining debt.

ASSEMBLE urgently needed Church World Service baby and hygiene kits.

SAVE THE DATE!

Our Annual Trivia Night fund-raiser is being planned for **Saturday, April 24**. Details available soon!

To Haiti With Love:

**A Free Benefit Concert
to Purchase Medicine for
HIV Positive Haitians**

SUNDAY, March 07, 2010

Time: 3:00-5:00 pm

**Place: Mayflower United Church of Christ
3901 NW 63rd Street, OKC, OK 73116**

Oklahoma Kick off to the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS
See event details on reverse side of flyer



**BEVERLY DUFFIELD
CROCHET/KNIT SOCIETY
(OUR COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
SOCIETY)**

The first meeting of the Beverly Duffield Crochet and Knit Society on Tuesday, February 9 was both fun and enriching for all in attendance. We ate and laughed and crocheted and talked and knitted and hated to stop when it was time to part. We honored Dr. Duff and other companions who have left our company. Though this meeting was to celebrate

women's week, we do hope to gather again with more companions joining us for the evening.

Crocheting and knitting are a great excuse for an evening of companionship and good humor. Watch for announcements and join us at our next meeting!

RESULTS OF COMMUNITY MEETING

Companions gathered on Sunday, February 14 at 4pm to discuss our finances and budget for 2010. The following proposal was presented and approved by consensus:

Community of Hope will change its budgeting process so that all ministries of the church are financed through the church's overall budget, rather than being accounted for separately.

After that item was agreed upon, we began to discuss the budget. Companions were unable to agree to a consensus decision on the budget (primarily because of limited time for discussion), so we will attempt another consensus decision on the budget on Sunday, March 7 at 4pm.

In accordance with our consensus decision-making guidelines, we will make every attempt to reach a consensus at that meeting within the time frame allotted. If we are unable to reach consensus, then a "majority rules" vote will be taken AT THE SAME MEETING. In other words, our budget will be approved or denied at our meeting on March 7th whether by consensus or "majority rules" vote. There will be no follow-up meeting unless

the budget is voted down.

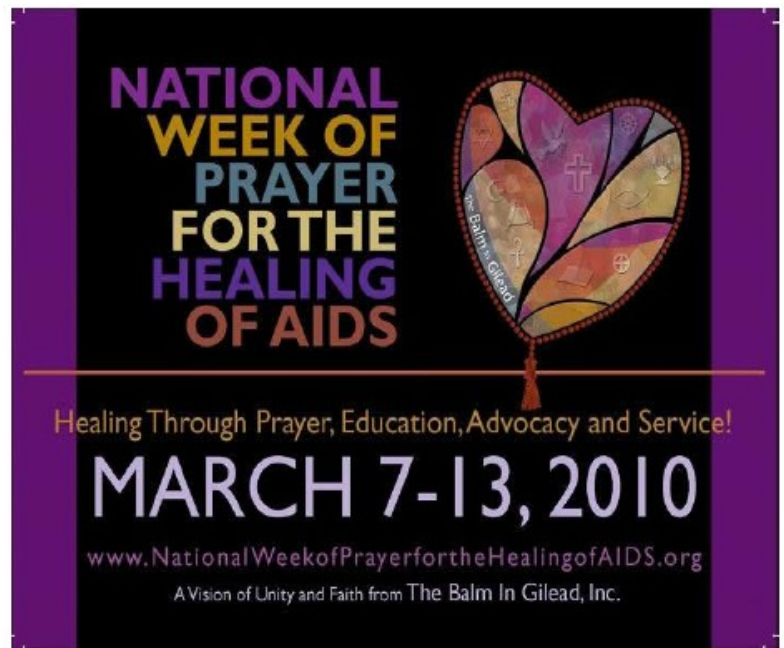
Two items were also discussed at the Community Meeting, but, because they were not announced ahead of time, the actual decision on those items was moved to the Coordinating Council, which occurred on Tuesday, February 16 at 6pm. The first item was a suggestion to remove the "Tables-to-Go" ministry from underneath the HIV Ministries and to make it a separate, stand-alone ministry of the church. The second item proposed that a Task Force be established to develop policies and procedures for handling our budgeting process under these new guidelines. The specific objective of that Task Force would be to identify policies and procedures for how to handle budget decisions by the Coordinating Council that are made between Community Meetings on the budget. In particular, how decisions are made (and communicated) on whether or not to support any new ministries (by including them in the budget), as well as how decisions are made (and communicated) on budget decisions that may need to be made if our revenue is different from our budget (increase or decrease). Both of these items were approved by consensus of the Coordinating Council on February 16.

CALL FOR COMMUNITY MEETING

Our second meeting to attempt consensus on the 2010 budget will occur on Sunday, March 7 at 4pm. At that meeting, we will either reach consensus on the budget (within the allotted time), or we will have a "majority rules" vote. If you'd like a copy of the budget to review before the meeting, please contact Barry Lazzar.

NATIONAL WEEK OF PRAYER

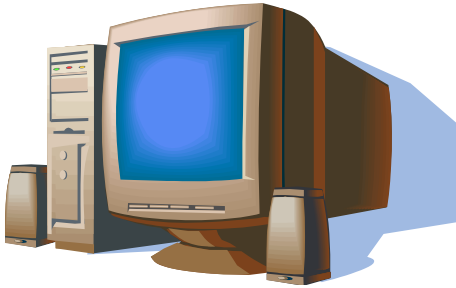
Balm in Gilead, an organization that seeks to empower the work of African and African-American faith communities in their work to address the health care needs of their communities, especially around HIV/AIDS, has invited all faith communities to join them in observing a "National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS", March 7-13. Community of Hope is working with other Tulsa-area churches to develop an area-wide observance of this week of prayer. Once specifics are available, we will include an announcement in our WEEKLY CALL. At a minimum, this event will be addressed in our worship service on Sunday, March 7 (which also happens to be Amistad Sunday), and in our Taize service on Thursday, March 11.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Are you interested in helping with the work at Community of Hope? If so, we have four new teams or task forces that have just been created, and two already-existing teams that need some additional help.

New Teams



Web/Internet Team. Our Pastor and Administrative Assistant will be attending a special “Web University” workshop in Phoenix, AZ the end of February (led by our denomination’s Congregational Vitality Team). Once they get back, they hope to immediately begin work on a re-designed, updated, and more vibrant website for Community of Hope with a target launch date of mid-April. They will also be looking at ways to more effectively (and respectfully) handle our various e-mail communications. If you’d like to help with either a one-time project of re-designing our web site and e-mail communications, or help with the on-going maintenance of our web site, please contact Julie Tate or Bob Lawrence.

Budget Policies Task Force. At our recent Community Meeting, it was recommended that we develop policies and procedures for handling our new budgeting process. (See the article in this newsletter about the Community decision on the budget.) Basically, this limited-time task force will work closely with the Finance Team to develop a set of policies and procedures to spell out the process for re-evaluating our budget throughout the year (between Community Meetings). In particular, this team will develop the procedures to be followed in case our revenue situation changes (for good or bad) from our budget forecast, as well as the procedure for including any new ministries in our budget. The Coordinating Council is asking this team to finish its work by July, so this is not a long-term commitment. If you’re interested in helping out with this team, please contact our co-chairs of the Coordinating Council, Bud Abbott or Karen Boland.

Fund-raising Team. Do you have creative ideas on special fund-raising activities that we can use to help with the various financial needs of Community of Hope? If so, please contact either Bud Abbott or Karen Boland to see about being part of a fun team that will focus on developing special fund-raisers (e.g., Trivia Night, garage sales, Fiesta, etc.), as well as on-going fund-raisers (e.g., Best Choice UPC code collections, GoodSearch, etc.).

Land Use Task Force. It has been suggested that we investigate the possibility of putting some of our unused land to use. The three main suggestions raised so far are: hosting a weekly Farmer’s Market; developing a Community Garden; or addressing housing needs (building a parsonage, subdividing and selling for development, etc). This Task Force will investigate those and possibly other uses of our land holdings and make recommendations to the Coordinating Council for further investigation and/or action. This is a short-term task force that will meet for no more than six months.

Existing Teams

Building & Grounds Team. This team is currently without a chair or any active members. The primary purpose of this team is to help us manage our building (maintenance projects), and our grounds (lawn and garden maintenance). As with most of our teams, this team does not actually need to perform the maintenance work. Rather, they simply need to coordinate Community efforts (Kin-dom Days), as well as work with various contracted service providers to maintain our building and grounds. This is a very important ministry because our building and land comprise the largest single asset we own as a community, and it is our primary “face” to the surrounding communities. If you are interested in helping out with the management of this vital asset, please let Bud Abbott or Karen Boland know.



Personnel Team. This team has two very qualified members, but is in need of someone to be the Chair of the Team. This would be an ideal situation for someone who is unsure of their leadership skills, or wants to develop those skills in a supportive environment. Both current team members have expressed a strong desire to mentor and guide anyone who is interested in developing and practicing leadership skills. If you’re interested in helping out with this team (either as Chair or a regular member), please contact Bud or Karen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WALK MS



The annual "Walk MS" benefitting the National Multiple Sclerosis Society will happen in Tulsa on Saturday, April 24. If you're interested in participating, please sign up on their website at:

<http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/OKE/fundraising-events/walk-ms/index.aspx>

NICARAGUA MINISTRIES

WINTER IS STILL HERE!

There's still time to get a hat or ear wrap created by Dawn Stemple. They are colorful and functional, too. All proceeds will go towards our Nicaragua missions. Each one is \$5.00.

NICARAGUA TRIP DATES COMING SOON!

We are close to finalizing the dates for next summer's trip. Please contact David if you are thinking of going so your input can be used when determining the dates.

GARAGE SALE COMING SOON!

Please begin saving your gently used treasures to donate for our next garage sale. It will be on Saturday, April 10th, at the church. More information will be in the next newsletter. Spring cleaning IS in your future.



A NOTE FROM OUR NATIONAL UCC VITALITY AND DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY

We want to express our appreciation of your Minister of Education & Outreach. This ministry is a good witness to our vital ministry with the growing Spanish-Speaking community. Please receive a token of appreciation in appreciation for her spirit and witness.

Blessings to you,

Dave Schoen

Local Church Ministries, UCC

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



This year's World Day of Prayer is on Friday, March 5, and we are asked to focus on the women of Cameroon.

The World Day of Prayer is a movement initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions. It is a movement symbolized by an annual day of celebration--the first Friday of March--to which all people are welcome. It is a movement which brings together women of various races, cultures and traditions in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year.

WHY RACE STILL MATTERS: Dr. Shelly Tochluk: Witnessing for Racial Justice, Thurs., March 4, 2010

An educator with a psychology background, Dr. Shelly Tochluk's experiences with UCLA's Track and Field team and her inner city teaching experiences shaped her dedication to confront race issues. She is the author of *Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It*.

Presentation: 9:30am, TCC Southeast Student Center Auditorium

Panel Discussion: 1pm, TCC Northeast Seminar Center

CRISIS OR CONFIDENCE? YOUTH AND RELIGION IN AMERICA: TOPIC OF OCCJ'S 2010 TRIALOGUE INTERFAITH SERIES

2010 Trialogue Planning Committee
(Julie Summers Assistant Executive Director, Camp Fire USA Green Country Council Inc. and Rev. Lizette Merchán, Dir. of Religious Activities & Education, Community of Hope, UCC)

Please join us for the 2010 Interfaith Trialogue Series, entitled "Crisis or Confidence: Youth and Religion in America". All sessions begin at 3:00 P.M.

Session Two will be held on Sunday, February 21st at the Schusterman Jewish Community Center, located at 2021 E. 71st Street. The topic is "Young Tulsans Talk About Their Religious Lives".

Session Three will be held on Sunday, March 7th at Peace Academy, located at 4620 S. Irvington Avenue. The topic is "Creating Strong Youth Communities of Faith: What Works? What Doesn't?".

UPDATE ON THE CASSIDY CANCER FUND

GREAT NEWS!!! Our Companion, TC, has reported that her latest appeal has been granted, resulting in the decision that her recent surgery is to be covered by her insurance company. (She still has deductibles and other out-of-pocket expenses related to her surgery, but the tests, surgery, and hospitalization costs will be paid by her insurance company.)

TC says: Thanks for everything each of you did throughout this fight and for all you continue to do! To quote Washington Irving again: "There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love."

Today is a good day to know I have felt unspeakable love from each of you and while I have felt some grief as I have moved through this process the majority of tears I have shed have been a result of UNSPEAKABLE LOVE!



Beyond Apologetics:

Sexual Identity, Pastoral Theology, and Pastoral Practice

Congregations have sufficient biblical, ethical, and pastoral resources to affirm and include GLBT people in the life of the church.

Now it's time to move beyond an "apologetics of inclusion" to develop theological stances and theological practices that recognize, respect, and integrate the realities of GLBT experiences with new insights emerging from the scholarly community.

That's happening right here in Tulsa.

You are invited to the Beyond Apologetics Symposium, a gathering of North American pastors and scholars committed to developing a new generation of thought and practice for ministry with transgendered, bisexual, lesbian and gay people.

The Symposium creates conversations among scholars, practitioners and broader communities who have mutual concerns about the health and well-being of LGBT people. The spiritual and theological practices and understandings that emerge from the project—focused on gender, identity, sexuality, and community action—have the potential to benefit people of all sexual orientations.

Please join us as six nationally known participants present their preliminary work and describe its importance for TGBL people, the local church and the broader community. There will be ample time for questions and discussion

February 25, 2010 at 7:00 PM
Tabbernee Conference Center
Phillips Theological Seminary
901 N. Mingo Road Tulsa, Ok

Beyond Apologetics is a collaborative ministry of two Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) seminaries: Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth and Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa. Generous support provided by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation in Philadelphia.

For more information, contact us by e-mail at
Beyond.Apologetics@ptstulsa.edu
or visit "Beyond Apologetics" on Facebook.

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Community of Hope
A SHALOM BASED COMMUNITY

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↓ LABEL ↓

We are a multiracial, multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all,
just peace church where God is still speaking!
Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

COMMUNITY MEETING

Sunday, March 7th, 4pm

Second and final meeting to decide:

Adoption of FY 2010 budget

Our budget is a very important theological statement of what the ministry priorities will be for Community of Hope. Please join us for this meeting and be in prayer with us as we discern, together, how best to follow in the way of Jesus.

Our vision is to be a community of faith, committed in the way of Jesus to the struggle for justice, compassion, and life-giving spirituality for all people; and our mission is to witness, in and through our life together, to the good news that the way of God is in our midst...and the journey is our home.