December 2018
Light a Candle

UCC Advent Podcasts for a Just World
Resilience in the Time of Herod

What's Happening in the UCC
3 Great Loves Daily Action Calendar

UCC 32nd General Synod in Milwaukee
June 21-25, 2019 plans

2019 Week of Prayer Resources
World Council of Churches

What's New in the UCC
New Manual on Ministry

- God-seeds
- Three Mission Priorities
  - Sheridan Projects
  - Camp Director change
  - New Camp position
- Cloud-based connector
- Coaching Training scholarships
- 2019 Camp Schedule
- MAC Day at the Legislature
- Global Ministries Christmas
- Calendar Items
- Social Media links
The preacher could not abide the hate mongering that had a grip on a world that was changing beyond comprehension. Religion cajoled people to stay the course, as inventors and entrepreneurs designed the first cars, airplanes, and radios in the early 1900's. Methodist preacher, William Watkinson, was not that type of brow-beating preacher, but neither would he turn away from what was unfolding in the world. Watkinson preached in a 1907 sermon that "denunciatory rhetoric is so much easier and cheaper than good works, and proves a popular temptation. Yet is it far better to light the candle than to curse the darkness."

As much as his "light a candle" phrase has been borrowed in the past 100 years (Eleanor Roosevelt, JFK), this preacher's message about the folly of denunciatory rhetoric is more relevant than ever. The world is again changing beyond comprehension. Now,

- it is commercial space flight, promised to be available before this Christmas, or
- 150+ million smart phones built this month in Chinese worker enclaves, and
- almost any information that exists is available to be beamed into these devices for personal consumption.

What lies, greed, and enslavement is it taking to maintain the systems that make these things possible? If money is "free speech," then how much money is being put to good works as wages have been stagnant, even during recent years of economic expansion? There are all too many interests that seek to get ahead by keeping others in the dark.

This December light a candle.

Maybe you can light a candle for hope, because there is a way through despair. Our church invited a homeless person in for our "hanging of the greens" potluck meal on Sunday. The man told me that his best friend/cousin died in his sleep as they slept out a few nights earlier. Now, he was so glad to be warmed by the food shared at our table and was strengthened to face another day.

Maybe you can light a candle for peace, because there is a way to understanding. Our Montana Association of Christians State legislative advisor, Abigail St. Lawrence, likes to tell how well our state legislators work together to make good decisions. Legislators who take time to get to know each other and the citizens they represent are listening and negotiating. On January 21, 2019, our MAC day at the
Maybe you can light a candle for joy, because there is a way of celebration. So many of our churches have gift trees for others during Christmas time. For example, Plymouth UCC in Helena has a gift tree with tags for items to gift to 36 homeless vets transitioning through the Willis Cruse House.

Maybe you can light a candle for love, because this is a way to connect. A few years ago, Molt UCC lent a silver communion set for use at our Conference Annual Meeting, and the communion plate got lost. An extra plate was found this fall at Camp Mimanagish and presented to Molt UCC for their use in communion. Molt stays in mission on a micro-budget, but as a major supporter of Camp Mimanagish. It is like the shared communion plate represents being upheld in a common love.

Maybe you can light a candle for Christ, because there is a way to live that is different than the "denunciatory rhetoric" out there in the world. Sing and send cards around Christmas about this light being born into your lives. This celebration needs to be heard from round the communion plates at the altar to the pocketfuls of food stored by a homeless man at a potluck. This celebration needs to be heard in the rotunda of the state capital to the muddy stadium of asylum seekers in Tijuana. This celebration needs to be heard wherever you travel in body, mind, and spirit. So light a candle...

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The Three Mission Priorities of the MT-NWy Conference UCC:

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1. **All congregations will be vital and viable**

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

--Micah 6: 8 [NRSV]

One of the Conference Minister’s jobs is to write letters of reference on behalf of churches seeking grants to enhance ministries. Recently, **Sheridan First Congregation Church UCC** embarked on a project to restore its stained glass windows and to add a restroom on the sanctuary level. We can be proud of the work and ministry of this church:

First Congregational Church has a vital place in the historic, cultural, and social life of downtown Sheridan, Wyoming. The congregation maintains a flagship edifice that has served the community and public in a variety of ways. In its early history, First Congregational Church was a venue for public lectures and forums presented by
to its public service, this is a church that draws membership from a 35-mile radius.

There are improvements in standards for public-use buildings since the cornerstone was laid for this stately brick church building in 1911. Accessibility to bathrooms on the main level of the sanctuary meeting space is necessary for the continued public enjoyment of the building. The congregation seeks to fund remodeling that will incorporate accessible bathrooms.

The beauty of this unique sanctuary, with its theater style seating area, rounded balcony, and corner style alter-stage area, is turned magnificent by its stained-glass windows and its renowned Hutchins pipe organ. The congregation seeks to fund a restoration of the 100+ year old stained-glass windows that will fix some sagging panels and weatherize them against the elements.

These two projects are modest needs for such significant building as First Congregational Church. Yet, these are significant expenses for a small-sized congregation to undertake on its own for the public good. This congregation asks your assistance in keeping this building as a vital cornerstone resource to an active downtown Sheridan.

2. The Conference will be appropriately staffed and the staff will be justly compensated.

At its September 2016 Board meeting, the Conference followed through on staffing recommendations made in a 2010 Camp Mimanagish business plan. That business plan called for hiring professional outdoor ministry staff to manage Camp Mimanagish. Our search for a Camp Director brought Josie Caton to us with a decade of Outward Bound experience, wilderness guide certification, and great enthusiasm lasting from her earlier years as a counselor at Mimanagish. After serving for 18 months (2 camp seasons) Josie worked through extensive remodeling and restoration projects, re-invigorated a culture of covenant at camp, and shouldered the transition to adult friendly camp experiences. These have been exhausting seasons for Josie. It is with disappointment and understanding that we received her resignation as Camp Director effective November 30. Josie provided the expertise and knowledge we hoped for in a Camp Director, and we are so grateful for her accepting these two seasons of camp challenges with energy and enthusiasm. Josie is a member of Pilgrim UCC in Bozeman and hopes to remain connected to Conference and Mimanagish concerns. This winter she resumes ski instruction at the Big Sky Yellowstone Club.
The Conference will offer transformative experiences and have an active presence in places where we are not now present. Speaking of staffing for Camp Mimanagish, there is a new position that has been created: Partner Organizations Recruiter. This position will help meet out current "hedgehog principle": Mimanagish delivers wilderness oriented spiritually-based transformational experiences in a rustic environment for the sake of the world, that maximize revenues per program. This part-time position is allocated 50 days of work to be concentrated in the first quarter of 2019. The recruiter's job is simply to develop and bring partner groups in to use Camp Mimanagish. We have about 8 weeks of vacant space at Mimanagish available between June 1 and October 1. What group, organization, or business do you know with whom our recruiter might talk about coming to Mimanagish? Who do you know who might be a good recruiter for the job?

West Region Conference Minister's Table supporting cloud-based connections

Along with the other 7 Conferences of the Western Region of the UCC, we are supporting the development of a cloud-based computer/tablet/smartphone solution for connecting within, between, and beyond our churches and conferences. This "b1" app will integrate social media communications, WEB site creation, calendaring, eNews, event planning.

Introducing an affordable new technology platform for UCC ministry & service

Raising & Leveling the Technology Playing field including:
• Role-specific tools for UCC ministry
• Personalized mobile and tablet apps,
• Vibrant and Fresh Websites
• Communication, Payment/Donation, & Management tools
• Cause- and passion-based connections within and between churches

Easy-to-use, world-class tools and resources for ALL our local churches, camps & conference centers, ministers, conferences, events, & causes.

MT-NWy Conference Scholarships Coach Training

The MT-NWy Conference UCC in collaboration with “Coaching for Clergy” will be offering classes that
Up to ten scholarships will be offered to cover the full cost of the first set of courses plus room/board, and half ($750) the fee for the mentor coaching portion of course.

Our instructor, the Rev. Dr. Felix Villanueva, is a Certified Master Coach. He is also a Certified Trainer and Mentor Coach. The week-long Clergy Coaching Certification Training will take place March 18-22, 2019 at the Ursuline Center, 2300 Central Ave., Great Falls MT 59401. There will also be a day of introduction and orientation on February 2 in Big Timber, MT. If you are interested in becoming a certified coach or can refer someone, please use the pre-registration link on our mnwcucc.org WEB site.
May:
Kick-Off Family Camp - May 24-27

June:
Drum Brothers - June 19-23
Creative Arts - June 27-30 – Virginia Bryant
Over the Hill Gang Work Camp - June 27-30 (Work Camp)

July:
Grandparents & Me - July 5-8 – Trudi Downer, Jerry Franks
Pride Camp - July 10-14 Bobbie Zenker, Laura Folkwein
Senior High MADD Camp - July 14-20 – Lynne Spencer-Smith, Meg Hatch
Grade 3-5 Camp - July 21-27 – Tracy Hellman
Mini and Me - July 21-23 – (Please Adopt Me)
Grade 6-8 Camp - July 28-August 3 – Cheryl Stewart

August:
Pay It Forward Work Camp - August 3-5 (Work Camp)
“Mom” & Me - August 3-5 – (Please Adopt Me)
Young Adult Camp - August 3-5 – (Please Adopt Me)
Barker Reunion - August 5-7: adopt Riverview
Conference Annual Meeting - August 8-11
Partner Camp - August 16-18
“Logged Out” off grid camp for engineers Aug 23-25
Soul of Aging -August 25-28 – Cathy Barker

September:
“Dad” & Me - August 31-September 2 – (Please Adopt Me)
Fishing Camp - August 30-September 2 – Doug McClelland
Geography of Grace - August 30-September 2 – Cathy Barker
Yoga Wellness - September 5-8 – Lisa Harmon
Boulder River Men’s Retreat - Sept. 13-15

Picture by Dylan Blodgett
When I participated in a pilgrimage to the Dominican Republic last April, I was able to be witness to the impactful and meaningful work being done by our partners in Global Ministries, in part because of our support. One of our visits was with CAMINANTE, an organization that provides protection and education for homeless and orphaned children. Sometimes, they literally gather these children from the streets where they are begging to get food just to stay alive. Frequently, the child they find on the street is one who is left caring for younger siblings because they are the oldest; they might be only 7 or 8 year old. Parents may have died, been killed or disappeared. CAMINANTE also works to combat child trafficking in the country.

Together in partnership with the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, the United Church of Christ is present around the globe through Global Ministries. Alternative Christmas is a special opportunity to make contributions to support this work. Each year, a couple of partners are selected as the primary focus for this seasonal giving. The Caribbean Initiative has been the 2-year focus for GM; therefore, two partners in these focus countries have been selected to be highlighted for Alternative Christmas support: House of Hope in Haiti and AMANESER in Puerto Rico. They both serve to meet the desperate needs of children, much like CAMINANTE in the Dominican Republic.

Now what can this mean for us? Well, maybe you have someone you’d like to remember or honor this Christmas season, someone who doesn’t want any gifts or is in a position to not need any material items. Think about what it might mean to them to receive a card from Global Ministries that indicates you have chosen to honor them by making a donation that can help do good work for those less fortunate and in dire living conditions. Or, as the moods of the season take you to memories of someone you have lost, a donation can be made in their memory, truly a meaningful way to highlight the life you shared with them. Or, maybe there is simply someone dear to you that you would like to honor with a special recognition.

You can learn more about Alternative Christmas or make a donation by going to globalministries.org. Click on Share in Special Giving and read more about this special opportunity. You can do a general donation, designate one of the focus partners in the Caribbean, or select to support another category of mission. These are all noted on the site. If it is easier, you can simply mail a donation with the name of the person you want to honor and their contact information along with your contact
Thank you for making a difference.
Merry Christmas from Global Ministries
Carol Shipley, GM Board Member

IN OUR PRAYERS

Our prayers of love and care are with Elaine Black as her husband, Andy Black, passed on November 18. Elaine served as our Conference Secretary and Registrar through 2016 for nearly 20 years. A
Our prayers are of healing and strength are with Rev. Bill Hawk as he regains breathing following a respiratory problem.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 10 - 14</td>
<td>Marc attends AM21 Search and Call meeting, San Diego</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 10 - 14</td>
<td>limited office hours, 10 am - 2 pm, Jennifer Penfield on vacation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 13</td>
<td>Clergy Gathering, Billings office, 10 am - 1 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 24 - 26</td>
<td>Conference Office closed for Christmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>office closed</td>
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<td>Jan 11-12</td>
<td>Church and Ministry Commission, Billings and Zoom</td>
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<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>office closed</td>
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<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Mimanagish Advisory Council, Zoom, 3 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Marc preaches at Great Fall First Congregational UCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Executive Committee, Billings office</td>
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<td>Jan 25 - 26</td>
<td>Board of Directors, Billings office</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>MAC Legislative Day in Helena</td>
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<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Leadership Coaching Introduction, Big Timber 9 am - 4 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 18-21</td>
<td>Marc at West Region CM Table meeting, HI Conference</td>
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<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>office closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 4-7</td>
<td>Marc at Council of Conference Minister meeting, Cleveland</td>
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<td>March 18 - 22</td>
<td>Coaching training, Ursuline Center, Great Falls</td>
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<td>March 29 - 30</td>
<td>Jesus Seminar, Billings First UCC</td>
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<td>March 29 - 30</td>
<td>&quot;Displacement, Loss, and Reinvention&quot;</td>
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<td>June 21 - 25</td>
<td>UCC Gen Synod in Milwaukee MT-NWy staying at Hilton City Center</td>
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Did You Know...

Mimanagish Matters is our new monthly eNews all about Mimanagish. Mimanagish Matters comes out during the third week of the month. Email the Conference office to subscribe.

Check out our CONFERENCE WEB SITE [www.mnwucc.org](http://www.mnwucc.org) and our MIMANAGISH WEB SITE [www.mimanagish.org](http://www.mimanagish.org)

We are on Facebook. Stay in touch and get all the latest news by liking our page. [Click here!](http://www.facebook.com)

And check out our Camp Mimanagish Facebook page. [Click here!](http://www.facebook.com)

"Another Voice" community television series features some of our Billings area clergy and Conference Minister [Click here!]