March 2018 to Vitality

Adese Fellowships
Spiritual Entrepreneurship

Gift to UCC Mission
$2.2 Million to OGHS and OCWM

New Rocky Mountain College doctorate program
RMC Occupational Therapy

UCC Pastoral Letter on Sexual Misconduct

New: The Micah Chat
Live ZOOM chat: March 22

- God-seeds
- Faith Formation
- Global Mission Visitor
- Conference Annual Meeting
- Mimanagish summer 2018 schedule
- West Region Youth Event
- Clergywomen's Retreat
- Calendar Items
- Social Media links

God-seeds, reflections from Marc Stewart
Our times ask us to exercise our capacity for prophetic witness, by Prophetic witness I mean
Can you believe the strength of the teens who have spoken with prophetic witness following the school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida? Their clarity in speaking truth to politicians, law enforcement, administrators, and N.R.A. is beyond comparison to anything voiced before. They have named to the political class in this country the fact that mass shootings will not be tolerated. In case their witness is seen as a fleeting moment, school walkouts are planned throughout the country during March and April. They resolve to change a political culture that has resisted legal and policy efforts that could prevent mass shootings. These young people are being heard. Dozens of corporations have withdrawn their official sponsorship of the N.R.A. Calls are even being made for this movement to be awarded the Noble Peace Prize.

I do not step lightly into prophetic witness in my Minister's "God-seeds" column. But here I am, so I will wonder aloud why we resist knowing what needs to be known. I wonder for you, "Do you know when your local school students will be participating in the walkout day? Do you know the difference between your personal views about guns and the N.R.A. view about gun control? Do you know the history of the Second Amendment? Do you know if your friends are afraid of guns, or afraid of not having assault weapons? Do you know, and own up to, your personal views of guns and mass shootings?"

People in this Northern High Plains and Rocky Mountain Region have a lot of common sense. What if our voices speak along with the voices of our youth in calling for legislation and policies that can help prevent mass shootings? What if, in our reasonableness, we can accept the truth that is being shared from our youth, and resolve to join them in their advocacy?

_for an excellent history of the Second Amendment, listen to the October 12, 2017 More Perfect podcast,"Gun Show"

_for some good "Kid Advice to the President," see this short SALT video

Where do adults belong in March for our Lives?

March for Our Lives: March 24 throughout Montana
School Walk Outs: Helena, March 14; Billings March 14; Bozeman March
A Reflection from the Faith Formation Committee

There is a phrase which I have often used in stewardship sermons, “Stewardship is about everything we do with everything we have.” I think something similar could be said about Faith Formation. The list of topics which contributes to the formation of faith in individuals and congregations includes all of the usual things:

- Bible study and prayer;
- Quality worship;
- Devotional reading;
- Topical study groups, etc.

But the list needs to stop there. Indeed, I am convinced that every experience which is a part of our living can contribute to the ongoing formation of our faith. For me that includes the practice of gratitude, in which I seek to always be on the lookout for opportunities to be grateful. And what I discover is that the more I look the more I find. I also participate in the Dances of Universal Peace, in which we share songs and simple body movement drawn from the world’s faith traditions. The Dances have helped to expand my spiritual vocabulary and regularly enhance my sense of connection with Sacred Presence. What practices might you engage in that will help to shape and enhance your faith? Dare to think outside the box. The possibilities are endless.

- Roger Lynn, Pastor at Plymouth Congregational Church in Helena and co-chair of the Faith Formation Committee for the Montana/N.Wyoming Conference UCC

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

1. All congregations will be vital and viable
Last week I participated in a retreat which focused on the theme of congregational vitality. It was a lively and inspiring experience which included pastors and church members from several UCC congregations around Montana.

Our guest leader was Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear, Minister for Church Vitality with the Pacific Northwest Conference UCC. She introduced us to a model for developing vital congregations which is based on Micah 6:8. “God has told you, O people, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” The basic idea behind the model is that “vitality” is not something that can be developed directly. Instead, it is one of the natural by-products which occurs when the elements of Micah 6:8 (doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God) are consistently and intentionally practiced within the life of the congregation. I found it to be a simple model with profound possibilities, and I believe it holds the potential to be transformational for our congregations and our Conference.

Rev. Stange-Tregear will be returning to join us in June at our Conference Annual Meeting in Great Falls. I encourage you to plan now to be a part of that exciting and inspiring event.

- Roger Lynn, Pastor at Plymouth Congregational Church in Helena

2. The Conference will be appropriately staffed and the staff will be justly compensated.
3. The Conference will offer transformative experiences and have an active presence in places where we are not now present.
Our Global Ministries provide a significant type of transformation experience for those who are missionaries, for those who are served, and for those who learn about our missions. We are honored to be visited by an missionary every few years in the conference.

This spring, Bruce Van Voorhis, missionary serving in Hong Kong, is available to speak throughout the conference from April 23-26, April 30-May 17, 2018. He has visited the conference during his last itineration and is looking forward to renewing relationships.

Bruce has been working for Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) since 2009. ICF is a joint program of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs located in Hong Kong, and the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. ICF is an interfaith movement of youth in Asia (primarily 20 to 30 years old) that works toward realizing peace with justice.

Please contact the conference office, ucc@mnwcucc.org, with suggested dates of when you would like Bruce to visit with your church for a Sunday or a mid-week fellowship time. Bruce will have his own car, but will need housing to be provided by the local congregation.

Go quickly and tell…
CAM 2018
Great Falls MT
June 15-17, 2018

Our Conference Annual Meeting will be hosted by First Congregational UCC Great Falls, June 15-17, 2018

Details to share at your church about this year’s CAM:

Letter of Call to meeting has been emailed to pastors and moderators,

Pre-CAM Boundary Training led by Holly Miller-Shank, Thursday 11 am - 5 pm

Starts Friday noon and ends after worship on Sunday
Friday luncheon keynote with Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear, Church Vitality Minister with the Pacific NW Conference UCC

Friday afternoon workshop offerings on being a viable church

Saturday morning hearings and business session, interspersed with video presentations from our conference churches

Saturday luncheon keynote with Rev. Dwight Welch, MSU-Billings campus minister

Saturday afternoon mission activity or Mimanagish engagement choice

Saturday evening banquet with keynote by UCC General Minister and President Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

A written sermon will be provided to each church so that all pastors may attend the Sunday CAM worship experience with Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer preaching

Registration will be available in mid-March on our WEB site.

Every congregation is asked to create a 2-3 minute video clip (you can use someone’s smart phone) after worship or during fellowship time where people respond to the question: What are you most excited about in your faith and/or in your church? Please email your clips to the conference office by May 15 to: ucc@mnwcucc.org
Mimanagish offerings planned for the 2018 season.

Mimanagish, our church conference camp and retreat center, is gearing up for its busiest, most diverse summer ever. A wide array of summer youth camps and opportunities for adults are scheduled, including arts, writing and fishing camps, yoga, men's and women's retreats, OWL Adult camp and much more. This year also marks the debut Pride Family Camp, for LGBT+ individuals, couples, families and children. See [www.mimanagish.org](http://www.mimanagish.org) for more details on all offerings and to register. Please share this information with your church youth, parents and small groups.

We have recruited a great number of Program Directors this year for Mimanagish which brings a marvelous new, fresh calendar full of camps for everyone. Now the focus is recruiting counselors and chaplains. In order to have youth camps, we need to have counselors. As a counselor, you get a week at camp with some amazing kids that bring experiences of a lifetime. Youth camps (including trainings) are July 15-21, Grades 2/3 Camp; July 20-28, Grades 4/5 Camp; July 27-August 4, Grades 6-8 Camp. In order to bring some spiritual guidance to our camps, we need chaplains. Women's Retreat, Men's Retreat, and Over the Hill Gang need a chaplain still. Please let Jonna Mandeville know if you are able to fill one of the roles this summer at Mimanagish: jonna@mnwcucc.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp Opening</th>
<th>Kick-off Camp</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 17</td>
<td>Friday, May 18</td>
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<td>Friday, May 18</td>
<td>Sunday, May 20</td>
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<td>Event</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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<td><strong>Geography of Grace</strong></td>
<td>Friday, May 25 - Monday, May 28</td>
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<td><strong>Women's Retreat Service Option</strong></td>
<td>Monday, June 4 - Tuesday, June 5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Men's Retreat Service Option</strong></td>
<td>Monday, June 11 - Tuesday, June 12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Creative Arts Camp</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, June 14 - Sunday, June 17</td>
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<td><strong>Singer/Songwriter Retreat</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, June 14 - Sunday, June 17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yoga, Wellness &amp; Cleanse Retreat</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, June 28 - Sunday, July 1</td>
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<td><strong>Grandparents and Me</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, July 5 - Sunday, July 8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Camp - 9, 10, 11, 12</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, July 8 - Saturday, July 14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mini and Me Camp</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, July 15 - Tuesday, July 17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Camp - 2, 3</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday, July 17 - Saturday, July 21</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Camp - 4, 5</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, July 22 - Saturday, July 28</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Camp - 6, 7, 8</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, July 29 - Saturday, August 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Over The Hill Gang</strong></td>
<td>Sunday, August 5 - Tuesday, August 7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fishing Camp</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, August 10 - Sunday, Aug 12</td>
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Camp Mimanagish Store

1. Check out our Camp Mimanagish branded merchandise store at: https://campmimanagish2017.itemorder.com/sale

2. Give the gift of a full or partial Mimanagish Camp registration.

3. Give a donation to Mimanagish in honor of a loved one. (Donation link)

The 2018 UCC Clergy Women Retreat to be held in Carefree, Arizona, May 1 - 3 features recent Antoinette Brown awardees as keynoters: the Rev. Day McCallister and the Rev. Loey Powell. Rev. Meg Hatch and Rev. Tracy Heilman attended last year, and plan on attending this year. Meg and Tracy would be glad to talk with you about how wonderful this retreat is. Information and registration LINK.

West Region Youth Event read all about it and register at: https://www.uccwrye.com/
March 4-8  Marc in Cleveland, Council of Conference Ministers
March 11-12  Marc with Butte UCC
March 22  The Micah Chat, informal ZOOM conversation with Marc, on topic of how we "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God" 3:30 - 4:30 pm
April 4-5 Marc in Washington DC, 50th Anniversary of MLK assassination
April 8-10 Marc in Cleveland for "re-imagining theological formation" conversation
April 15  Marc with Absarokee Community UCC
April 22 Marc with Red Lodge UCC
April 29 Marc with Baker UCC
May 1-3  UCC Clergywomen Retreat, Carefree, AZ
May 31 Clergy Boundary Training offered through ELCA in Great Falls
June 14  Clergy Boundary Training, Great Falls 11 AM - 5 PM
June 15-17  Conference Annual Meeting, Great Falls noon Friday through Sunday
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 NEW CONFERENCE WEB SITE www.mnwcucc.org
and our NEW MIMANAGISH WEB SITE www.mimanagish.org

We are on Facebook. Stay in touch and get all the latest news by liking our page. Click here!

And check out our Camp MImanagish Facebook page. Click here!

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

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