The latest news from the Montana-Northern Wyoming UCC Conference of the UCC

July 2018
Our Unique Place

For a Just World
new UCC podcast series

New Date: The Micah Chat
Thursday, July 19

UCC Keeping You Posted
subscribe to weekly UCC eNew

New MT-NWy UCC YouTube Channel
subscribe to our YouTube channel

- God-seeds
- Our Three Mission Priorities
- Conference Annual Meeting
- Mimanagish News
- West Region Youth Event
- Calendar Items and Mimanagish Summer Schedule
- Social Media links

God-seeds, reflections from Marc Stewart

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here" is that aspect of the Gospel that is in danger of
Such profound giftedness blessed our recent Conference Annual Meeting. All the speakers were engaging and relevant to our theme "Go quickly and Tell."

Holly MillerShank led boundary training by introducing us to the different religious worlds that we bring to the diversity of who we are in the UCC:
- the world of guilt and redemption (the recovering sinner),
- the world of stagnation and self-actualization (the adventurer),
- the world of injustice and justice (the crusader),
- the world of worldliness and spiritual reunion (the orphan).

Our assessments helped us recognize the differences and languages that we use in relationship to each other.

Conference Minister Bill Lyons, with the Southwest Conference UCC, was a guest at our CAM. In the spirit of our theme "Go Quickly and Tell" Marc Stewart turned his sermon time over to Bill Lyons during opening worship. Rev. Lyons shared new information regarding the separation of immigrant families and the overwhelmed immigrant ministry of Green Valley UCC where Randy Mayer serves in Arizona.

Courtney Stange-Tragear got us talking with each other about what it takes to foster church vitality. Open story-sharing between people is key to our participation in fostering vital churches. We really need to know each other and also our wider communities. Courtney presented three sets of questions designed to lead to deeper awareness of church, community, and colleagues. For example, "within your congregation, who are the members that you need to deepen relationship with
- because they are making an impact?
- because they have influence?
- because you can learn from them?
- because they challenge you?
- because they are struggling and you want to work WITH them?
- because....?"

Dwight Welch, Campus Minister at MSUB (Billings) expanded our understanding of being in ministry with young adults and "nones." Dwight especially challenged our traditional sense of worship happening primarily on a Sunday and in a church.

Our UCC General Minister and President John Dorhauer passionately made a case statement for the existence of the United Church of Christ. The Spirit has called the United Church of Christ to ministries of love that would be in danger of diminishment.
people. This is borne out in the many people, clergy, and congregations that are finding the UCC to be a home, as they have been forced out of other communities.

You are invited to join Marc Stewart for a monthly conversation about church vitality and viability happening in our churches. Marc will host a ZOOM chat for conversations. Join on July 19, 3:45 pm - 4:45 pm by connection on your computer, tablet, or smart phone through this link:

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: https://zoom.us/j/8013404215
Or iPhone one-tap:
US: +16699006833,,8013404215# or +16465588656,,8013404215#
Or Telephone:
US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 801 340 4215

The Three Mission Priorities of the MT-NWy Conference UCC:
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]
churches are vital communities of faith. In addition to the questions to ask within our congregations, Courtney would have us explore the necessary connections we have within our wider communities. "Which institutions and leaders in your community do you need to deepen relationship with because they are making an impact? because they have influence? because you can learn from them? because they challenge you? because they are struggling and you want to work WITH them? because...?"

Do you notice that these are the same questions we are challenged to ask within our own community? These same questions can also be asked within our collegial connections and relationships.

2. The Conference will be appropriately staffed and the staff will be justly compensated.
New Clergy Compensation Guidelines were approved by CAM delegates. These guidelines include a 2% increase over the 2015/16 guidelines, and new guidelines for part-time ministries. There was also significant discussion about the difficulty churches experience providing health insurance, and a suggestion that the MT-NWy Conference create a contribution pool from which health insurance for pastors could be met.

3. The Conference will offer transformative experiences and have an active presence in places where we are not now present.
On Sunday evening following Conference Annual Meeting, four national UCC leaders joined John Dorhauer in an immersion experience of Billings First Church's recovery (such as Wellbriety and the Transitional Recovery and Culture Program) ministries with the Native community. Billings First Church is the only entity in downtown Billings welcoming and ministering with the Native community.
Minister of Healing and Community Transformation, Lisa Harmon, showed the new "pocket park" next to First Church where sage and sweetgrass are being grown for use in smudging. A street-person stopped to participate in the awe shared about this project, and he was tenderly welcomed and introduced to the Wellbriety meeting. Following the Wellbriety meeting, everyone participated in sharing stories and experiencing a smudging ceremony. The group was impressed by the remodeled space at First Church that will be used to host non-profit groups, such as Western Native Voice. The Native leaders shared their appreciation for how Pastor Lisa put together the Community Innovations outreach program during her tenure as Executive Director of the Downtown Business Alliance, and how she builds on that good work as a pastor with Billings First Congregational Church. On July 20, First Church Billings will add all the Montana tribal flags to the outside of the church building, showing its expanded ministry with all people, especially with the urban Native American population of Billings. Everyone is invited to this evening celebration, including a Community Feed and a Round Dance happening in the fellowship hall.

Go quickly and tell…
CAM 2018 ReCap
First Congregational UCC Great Falls provided the most wonderful hospitality for our 133rd Conference Annual Meeting. Every detail was carefully attended to! Here is a brief synopsis of our business meeting:

1. vote on Conference Bylaw change to add youth/young adult delegates PASSED
2. vote on national UCC Constitution change PASSED
3. vote on Clergy Compensation Guidelines PASSED
4. accept reports PASSED
5. vote on budget WILL BE POSTPONED TO FALL 2018
6. vote on nominations and install leadership
   Moderator: Rev. Tracy Heilman
   Vice-moderator: Rev. Lynne Spencer Smith
   Treasurer: Terri Goodsell
   Committee for Outdoor Ministries chair: Trudi Downer
   Central area Board rep: Leslie Roche
   East area Board rep: Sheila Naismith
   Church and Ministry Commission: Pat Christian and Rev. Wendy Brown, West area; Rev. Meg Hatch and Don Kinney, Central area; Ila Dee Talcott, East area
   General Synod delegate: Nicholas Knoblauch, East area

MT-NWy UCC YouTube videos from CAM
   Church Vitality workshop with Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear
   Sunday worship with John Dorhauer preaching
   Local church videos of church vitality

Offering for Immigrant Family relief totaled $1411.

Mimanagish retreats and camps

Mimanagish, our church conference camp and retreat center, is gearing up for its busiest, most diverse summer ever. See www.mimanagish.org for more details on all offerings and to
Carlee Downer Scholarship Fund: Sponsor a child, youth, or adult to attend Mimanagish by supporting the Carlee Downer scholarship fund. For those who need scholarship, please fill out the [application form](#).

Registration for camps are due, so get your children, youth and adults registered ASAP.

Mimanagish hosted an informational booth at the Billings Strawberry Festival in June. The PRIDE Camp and Civic Action Camp drew a lot of interest. Some people even made unsolicited donations to the scholarship fund to support these camps. One gentleman offered $5, and then returned a few minutes later, confessing that he felt that was too little and so offered to scholarship a full campership.

The Conference is teaming up with the UCC Pension Boards to offer a pastor and spouse/significant other wellness retreat at Mimanagish September 10-12. There will be presentations on health and wellness, retirement/pre-retirement, financial management, and mindfulness. Churches are encouraged to support their pastor and spouse to attend this retreat.

---

**Camp Mimanagish Store**

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

2. Give a donation to Mimanagish in honor of a loved one. ([Donation link](#))

3. [New merchandise](#) for the 2018 Mimanagish season.
Over 400 youth from the eight conferences of the West Region UCC will be attending the West Region Youth Event in Hawaii. Fourteen of our youth will attend, led by Kim Harris.

June 25-29 West Region Youth Event
June 25-July 10 Marc Stewart on vacation
June 28-July 1 Yoga, Wellness, and Cleanse Retreat, Mimanagish with Lisa Harmon
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!