

A weekly collection of news, reflections and announcements from the  
Congregational Church of West Medford  
an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



## PASTORAL REFLECTION

*"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."—Matthew 5:14—16*



### Star Light, Star Bright—Make Me A Lamplight

In modernity where the flip of an ever-handy switch at either end of the room can light up a room, a powerful spotlight senses motion and illuminates the pathway when we pull in at night, we have apps on our phones to flash-light when the power goes out and "pollution" from our brightly lit nightscapes fade the stars that used to gleam brilliantly, it's hard to remember just how dark and frightening the hours between sunset and sunrise used to be for our ancestors. In Jesus' time, light was a precious commodity.

Perhaps the only place where people still tune the rhythms of their lives to the lights in the sky are those who dwell above the Arctic Circle. Despite the modern convenience of the light switch, there is no ignoring the fact that the daylight hours all but disappear for several months. In Tromso, Norway, this period of darkness is called *morketida* and the people can look forward to only two or three hours of indirect or half-light around midday for nearly two months. While the stars that light the sky during this *morketida* period shine brightly for long periods, they are not enough to dispel the gloom that pervades the streets and can easily poison the soul.

The truth is, we human beings all experience periods of *morketida*, and stars are not enough to dispel that gloom. We need more common lights or lamps to light our everyday paths on this earth. Whether in literature, academe, Hollywood or the firmament, stars inspire us, they dazzle us, they entice us to dream. But a star won't keep you from stubbing your toe on a stone as you wander down a dark and lonely road.

In this week's text from Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus urges us to be lights for the world, to serve as lamps for one another—and it is not enough to be a supernova star that dazzles brightly and then burns out. Being a star that shines down on others is enticing to our egos, but being a steadily burning lamp that lights the way is what the world needs!

*Continued on next page*

Jesus, as always models for us the Way to being that light and teaches that being "first" in the kingdom of God comes through selfless service to others. Doing for others is the way to turn up the candle-power on our individual lights. We burn brighter by loving others more and ourselves less. We also burn brighter by sharing our lamp light. As teachers and mentors of the faith, we help to illumine the pathway that lies directly at the feet of those we are teaching, offering guidance and service in indirect, even pedestrian ways.

When we combine the illuminating power generated within each of us by our relationship with Jesus we become even brighter. The "city built on a hill" is not noticed because one lone light flickers in a window. It is the combined wattage of an array of lights, each burning in its own place, but for a common purpose, that sets the city ablaze in the midst of a dark and dreary night.

Beloved, there are none among us, no lamps that cannot throw some light on some darkened portion of a fellow-traveler's pathway. You must know--our light source is unquenchable, so take confidence in the potential power of your lamp. The psalmist reminds us that the eternal flame of Scripture is always available to us for additional fuel: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). As followers of Jesus, we have everything we need to bring some light into the dark of another's night, to offer a flashlight to point out the Way and to collect our lights to make a difference in the world. May we let our collective lamps shine, that others may see and find this brilliant Light of the World that we call Jesus. Let us be set ablaze with a common purpose that we might be a city on the hill right here in West Medford, brightening the darkness with God's Glorious, Glowing Grace.



With blessing and prayer, Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade/[revwdmiller@comcast.net](mailto:revwdmiller@comcast.net)/617.592.5853

## IN OUR PRAYERS AND PASTORAL CARE



Concerns: Herman's brother-in-law, Mike, lost his leg because of a blood clot; June L. in active treatment and for her family as they care for June; Kim G. who strained her back; Louise lifts up a school mate who was killed in an auto accident and her mother who was driving; Stephanie M. for the people of the Ukraine. Rev. Wendy encourages us to grow and learn from the stories of Black History.

Joys: We celebrate that Shirley G. is recovering well and appreciates the flowers sent by the church; Jenna N. trip to Brazil; Jamie G. graduating and becoming a Medford Police Officer.

We continue to pray with Connie W., her brother Skip and their family at the death of Joyce Barnard Conlon a former member of our congregation; Shirley G. in recovery from surgery and June L. in treatment; Ose's friend Wolfhart with Alzheimer's and cancer passed away, for his wife Alma and all who loved him; those affected by weather extremes; for Bruce R.'s brother Bill in early recovery; Charlene C's brother Lou in the final stages of Alzheimer's; our sexton Steve's daughter and grandson; Dick's friend, Ed, and his caregiver; for Ernestine S.'s continued recovery at home; our church's ongoing

process of discernment and for the leaders who are guiding our conversations and discovery. We pray for all the MACUCC churches engaged in Crossroads; for all those struggling with cancer, addiction and Alzheimer's; for the environment; for President Obama and Congress regarding our present times of strife—may God's intentions prevail as they make decisions; Eva W. recovering at home. We remember fallen soldiers and Veterans and those serving in our military. We lift up all of the children of our congregation and those we bless in Bright Stars. **Please send prayer requests to [office@medfordchurch.org](mailto:office@medfordchurch.org) by noon each *Wednesday*.**

**Pastoral Care Concerns:** The Deacon of the Month for February is Robin Baker who can be reached at (robinb12@verizon.net). Please let the deacon of the month know if there is someone who could use a visit, phone call, card, or prayer. The Deacons (aka: Spiritual Life) rely on your input about the well being and needs of our members and friends. Rev. Wendy can be reached: revwdmiller@comcast.net.

## OUR CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Joint Ministry Teams:** Thank you for your support of a new way of planning and collaborating about our ministries. Beginning this month, Spiritual Life, Christian Education and Outreach Ministry Teams (Committees) will meet together as a joint ministry team to **focus on faith formation**, plan and imagine our ministries for now and in the future. We are excited about the creativity and possibilities that this new model might engender. ***ALL are welcome to attend the joint ministry team gathering and we extend an invitation to any and all comers who want to share an idea about our ministry, ask a question about faith formation, see what it is all about or just join the party!*** The schedule is as follows:



- The Joint Ministry team will meet on the ***second Wednesday of the month, 7:00 PM – beginning February 12—in Bean Chapel. This gathering will begin with worship and reflection.***
- Church Council will continue to meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 7:00 PM.
- Spiritual Life will also meet on the first Sunday of the month, 11:30 AM; for 30 minutes to address any confidential pastoral care matters – beginning March 2.

***We welcome your items and questions. Contact members of the ministry teams/Rev. Wendy.***

**Empty your Pockets in the Pennies from Heaven Jar:** The "Jar" will be in the Narthex for you to empty your pockets of the loose change you may have. This jar is just one way to help support the church in a very easy way. The jar easily takes coins and paper money.



### Thank you from Diva!

Dear Kind and Generous Christians, It warms my heart that you are so wonderful that you even cared enough about an older homeless kitty like me to fund my dental surgery. Your Christian practice knows no bounds and your love is greatly appreciated. I had my surgery successfully and I am now waiting at the Pets in Need Somerville shelter for a forever person. If you know of anyone who can provide a safe indoor home to a gentle girl kitty who loves sitting on your lap, catnip and lots of treats, please apply to adopt me!



Diva

### Altar Flowers Always Welcomed:

Please contact Brenda Briggs [bgbriggs51@gmail.com](mailto:bgbriggs51@gmail.com) (or the church office@medfordchurch.org) to make arrangements to schedule a Sunday to bring flowers or order them in honor or memory of a loved one.

**Fellowship Café:** During the month of February the Christian Education Committee is sponsoring coffee hour. All are welcome to help with our fellowship time. Karen McCune Barca has taken on the responsibility of setting up and cleaning up the coffee weekly—and she is organizing the volunteers!! ***If you can bring some goodies or veggies or fruit to support, please be in touch with Karen.***

**Worship Volunteers Always Welcome:** We are always looking for folk to participate in worship as ushers and readers. Youth and Children are always welcomed to participate. The Spiritual Life Committee recruits readers. Robin Baker is the contact at this time ([robinb12@verizon.net](mailto:robinb12@verizon.net)). You are also welcome to call the church office to volunteer. Our church works better when we all pitch in and participate! Your help is appreciated.

**Cleaning Our Closets!!** Volunteers are needed for cleaning out the church closets: As we place the church building on the market and consider our future, Kathy Williams is leading this effort to “clean out our closets.” You would be amazed at how much stuff has accumulated and is stuck in corners. We will donate, trash, recycle as is called for. **Cleaning will take place weekly from 9:30-10 am before church and 11 am–noon after church until completed. Volunteers are particularly needed to drive boxes of unneeded items to charity donation sites.** If you would like to join Kathy on this mission, please contact her at [kathypricewilliams@yahoo.com](mailto:kathypricewilliams@yahoo.com).



**Tax Documentation:** If anyone would like a letter from the church to verify your pledge/contribution for 2013 tax purposes, please contact Tom Roche at [thomasroche@comcast.net](mailto:thomasroche@comcast.net) / 781-281-1000.



### Happy February Birthdays

- 1 James Grubb, Jr.
- 17 Karen Morey
- 17 Paul Roberts
- 21 Tom Roche
- 23 Matthew David Kromm
- 28 Johnny Maloney

## CROSSROADS PHASE II

- **Sunday Weekly: Prayer for our Process:** Each Sunday from 9:15 — 9:30 am, Rev. Wendy will lead a time of prayer in Bean Chapel for our discernment process.
- **Wednesday Weekly: 1st, 3rd and 4th Wednesday Worship and Study: Being Jesus Followers.** 7:00 pm—8:00 pm, Rev. Wendy will lead a weekly worship, study and dialogue designed to consider what Jesus asked of us when he said, “Follow me,” and what that suggests to us about what God is calling us into for the future.

**2nd Wednesday Worship and Study from 7:00-7:30 PM and  
Joint Ministry Team Meeting from 7:30 to 9:00 pm.**

**This Week, Feb 12 we will continue to consider Matthew 4:12—23  
asking what it means to ‘fish for people’.**

- **Weekly: Worship Experimentation:** We will deliberately experiment in worship—with new music, with experiential practices, with more visual and embodied engagement. Some of this has begun to happen already but we are excited to try other new things. As the journey unfolds, we will try new models for worship—perhaps a Taize service, or worship in another space, or a dinner worship. Watch for more specifics.
- **Weekly: Exploration:** Every Sunday we will bring you 15 minutes of exploration via video, web sites, and other means—offering you a chance to see vital and viable ministries and unique models for worship and community. This time is designed to spark ideas and creativity in us—and will happen each Sunday after worship during fellowship hour. We intend to expose ourselves to lots of new ideas in the interest of getting our own creative juices flowing.

**This Sunday, Feb 9 we will watch a video of  
Luther’s Table—[www.lutherstable.org](http://www.lutherstable.org)**

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**We are working on additions to our web site**

**[www.medfordchurch.org](http://www.medfordchurch.org)**

(including a new Crossroad’s blog)

which will allow you:

- A list and access to the vital and viable ministries that are doing a new thing;
  - A place to add your own responses to the things we are trying
    - A place for your ideas about what else we might try
  - A place for the “Explorers” to describe what they have found
    - And other things that unfold...

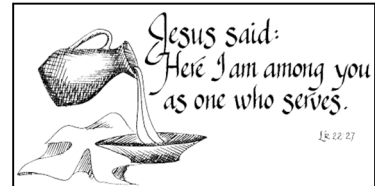
**We really want to encourage you to like us on facebook too—there is a lot that gets posted on our facebook page that will help us to understand the changing landscape of our ministry and the influence those changes need to have on our choices.**



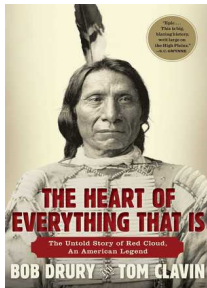
## MISSION AND OUTREACH

### **Urgent Note Regarding 2014 Re-Member Trip to Pine Ridge**

The First Congregational Church of Winchester has agreed to take over the CCWM Re-Member reservation for the 2014 mission trip planned for July 26– August 1, 2014. If anyone from CCWM is interested in joining this summer's trip, they are welcome to join the trip. The leadership and planning for the trip s being led by our former student, Winchester member, Jena Roy. **The deadline for deposits to Re-Member is 2/15/14 so if you have a desire to participate, be in touch with Jena ASAP, [jenaroy@aol.com](mailto:jenaroy@aol.com).** Due to many other questions we are facing this season, the Pine Ridge Ministry Team determined that planning and raising funds for a trip this summer would divert us from our objective of discerning God's call for our future.



**CCWM to Sell Hoka Coffee on March 1 at Super Saturday:** The Pine Ridge Ministry team is looking for a few folk to help with staffing a table at Super Saturday to sell Hoka Coffee to raise funds for our ministry with the Reservation. If you can help, please contact Joy Harris ([brujoy2@comcast.net](mailto:brujoy2@comcast.net)). Folk attending super Saturday may be able to help during breaks.



### **Sunday, March 09, 11:30—2:00 pm: Book Discussion: “The**

**Heart of Everything That Is”** Susan D’Arcy will lead this first book in book series/discussion group. “The Heart of Everything That Is” is written by Bob Drury and Tom Clavin – and tells the untold story of Lakota Sioux chief, Red Cloud. There are ten copies in local libraries or you are encouraged to purchase the book yourself. We are open to suggestions for other Indian themed books for future book discussion groups. Contact Kathy or Joy suggestions or questions.

### **Heifer Farm Rutland: Pancakes at the Farm—Saturday, March 8**

**9:00 am to 1:00 pm**

Tour the farm, visit the sugar shack, spend time with the animals and enjoy a hearty pancake breakfast with Heifer Farm maple syrup and sausages. Advanced reservations are required so please let Susan D’Arcy Fuller know if you’d like to attend by Feb 15th. We will arrange carpooling once we know how many are going. Adults \$12.00, Children (3-10) \$6.00, free for Children under 3

*Note this replaces the Heifer trip postponed due to weather.*



## FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS



**Power Kids Summer Camp Program** strengthens character and community. *Power Kids* helps children to mature socially, emotionally, intellectually, morally, and physically to realize their dreams and unlock their true potential. Unlock your child's potential by enrolling them today and give your **Kids** the **POWER** to succeed. <http://www.medfordpowerkids.com/> A scholarship is funded by *Power Kids* Summer Enrichment Program. It covers

full tuition for six weeks of a *Power Kids* summer experience (valued at \$1,525). Eligibility Requirements: Enrolled in grades K through 5; Resident of Medford, MA; Letter of referral from a non-family member. Complete and submit the above information, postmarked no later than the deadline of MARCH 28 to: Power Kids, Paul and Patricia Coates Memorial Scholarship, 59 Dunster Lane, Winchester, MA 01890, Direct Dial: 781-756-4874

**The Paul and Patricia Coates  
Memorial Scholarship**  
Scholarship will be awarded on April 1, 2014.

### UCC's Silver Lake, CT Summer Camp Registration Now Open



**SPEND A WEEK AT CAMP IN GOD'S BACKYARD**

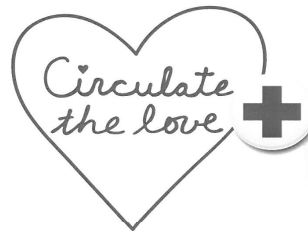
**SILVER  
LAKE**  
Conference Center

Co-Directors Anne and Tim Hughes  
223 Low Road, Sharon, CT 06069  
860-364-5526 • [hughes@ctucc.org](mailto:hughes@ctucc.org)  
[WWW.SILVERLAKECT.ORG](http://WWW.SILVERLAKECT.ORG)

Silver Lake is the Outdoor Ministry  
program of the Connecticut Conference  
of the United Church of Christ.



**GET REAL: FINDING YOUR TRUE SELF IN JESUS**



American Red Cross

**Please give  
blood.**

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) | 1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767

### Medford Community Blood Drive

Sponsored by Hallmark Health System's Lawrence Memorial Hospital

**Saturday, February 15, 2014**

**9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Hallmark Health System's Lawrence Memorial Hospital**

**Classrooms A & B**

**170 Governors Avenue**

**Medford**

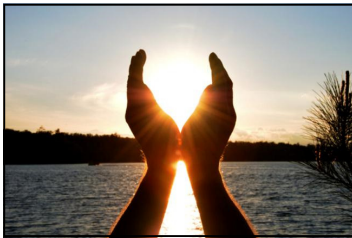
To make an appointment please call 1-800 RED CROSS (733-2767)  
or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

## NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE UCC

**Sourcing the Soul for Lent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 9:00 am--3:30 pm. *"Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration."* --John 4:23 – 24 (*The Message*). A day for those who seek to nourish their souls in preparation for the Lenten journey. Come engage with scripture through worship and a variety of spiritual practices that invite ways of opening to God's Presence with/within us. The Practices of the day, together with the reflections from the gathered community, will create a model for creating Lenten Worship or your own personal devotion. For Clergy, and all pastoral care-givers, worship leaders and those thirsty for God. With Rev. Dr. Dirkje F. Legerstee & Rev. Susie N. Allen.

Registration: <http://www.macucc.org/events/detail/1497>

**Filling Your Cup: Opening Your Heart.** An Adult Christian Spiritual Formation Retreat with Matt Carriker & Elaine Gaetani, Friday, Feb. 21, 2014 (5:00pm) to Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014 (4:30 PM).



Designed to:

- Ground you spiritually
- Replenish your energy, joy, and purpose
- Give you practices to keep your cup overflowing
- Help you live your life as a spiritual practice
- Discover your spiritual tools for the ups and downs of life

Registration: <http://www.macucc.org/events/detail/1404>.

### Save the Date!

**215th Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Conference** is being held June 13 - 14, 2014, at the Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center. The theme of this year's meeting, inspired by John 14:12; is "Greater Works than These." The Keynote Speaker will be **Yvette Flunder**, Founder and Senior Pastor of **City of Refuge United Church of**



**Christ** in San Francisco. Flunder founded the City of Refuge UCC in 1991 in order to unite a gospel ministry with a social ministry. City of Refuge is a thriving inner-city congregation that celebrates the radically inclusive love of Jesus Christ. Preaching a message of action, the church has experienced steady numerical and spiritual growth. In June 2003, Bishop Flunder was consecrated Presiding Bishop of **The Fellowship**, a multi-denominational fellowship of 110 primarily African American Christian leaders and laity representing 56 churches and faith-based organizations from all parts of the United States Mexico and Africa.

