

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 CROSSROADS PHASE II



Dream a Little Dream—of We!

As the vision of ministry for our mighty, little faith community unfolds right before our eyes, as the shape of that ministry takes on some pretty fabulous form, and as the implications of our vision and mission for our city inspire us—I am ever so grateful that you allowed a handful of us to begin the leadership development journey into which we have stepped via LDI (The Leadership Development Initiative offered by the Episcopal

Diocese of Mass: diomassleads.org).

Now, you may be feeling as though you do not know what that ‘vision for ministry’ is – and in part you are right. We have not yet issued statements about the “Recommendation for a Bold Decision.” We *have* identified the Shared Values and a Draft Mission Statement (click on these links to review) and these have fueled the unfolding of our vision.

And, over the last few weeks, especially as we have left the sanctuary for worship and been in conversations about the practical aspects of selling the property—a picture, nay, a dream has unfolded in the hearts of your leadership team and it is brilliant! It has happened in part because, with the input of the Real Estate folk, we can really imagine what it will be like to be freed from the burden of our property and our institutional way of being (and that it will happen very soon). But it has also happened because the Holy Spirit is at work amongst us and abundance, creativity and possibility is driving the thinking of your leadership team. So, here are some clues to the recommendation that is being crafted as I write this, and that will be presented to you next Sunday, April 13—after our Palm Sunday Worship.

We are dreaming of a progressive Christian community that is experiencing the sacred in everyday, ordinary moments; building loving relationships with God and each other; and is discovering old and new spiritual practices that leave one refreshed and inspired. We are dreaming of a rag tag, wildly diverse group of questioners and believers (and everything in between) who are forming faith at home and together through worship, ritual, prayer, practice, service and study. We are dreaming of making a difference in the lives of people who would not ordinarily come to “Church” but who will find “church” in us.

We are dreaming of threshold moments where the stuff of our regular lives becomes the stuff of holiness and grace. We are dreaming of worship that challenges and amazes and community that is called to care. We are dreaming of a place where there are no barriers to entry and where the table of

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hospitality is set with love and forgiveness and grace and you can't help but want to sit down and be fed.

We are dreaming of having some classic forms of worship where we will go to a sanctuary somewhere and have an order of worship and pray the way we love to pray and sing hymns and hear The Word. And we are dreaming of new ways of praising God—through online practices, drop in meditation, experiences of Nature and study groups that do not look like church as we know it, but that bring us in touch with our Creator.

We are dreaming of moving out of our big, beautiful building and building bold, beautiful big-ness on the move. We are dreaming of a welcome center in the public square that offers hospitality seven days a week and where people can drop in to laugh and cry and find a faith that works for them. We are dreaming of action that expresses what we stand for—of being “those Christians” that advocate for justice and make a difference in the lives of people in need, that feed the hungry and clothe the naked and take seriously Jesus’ call to love our neighbor. And we are dreaming of a people so blessed, so transformed by their experience of being a part of this dream – that they cannot help but invite others to join them on the journey!

I suppose I could write and write and write about this dream because I cannot help but share the glory of it—but I’m guessing you have reached the end of your rope. And you are wondering just how, in bloody h---, our weary little group could make something so bold and big happen!?!?

Well, in part we will ask you to take a risk and courageously support our recommendation for a bold budget that includes the staff and tools to make a go of this “new ministry.” You will hear plenty more about this next week. But we will recommend that we support the dream for at least a couple of years (with measurable milestones along the way to indicate if we should continue or quit) with plenty of resources to make a real go of it.

But, I started this post by expressing my gratitude for LDI and I believe the leadership practices therein will be the key to making this dream a reality. The practices are easily transferred to others. Through these ‘community organizing’ practices (from Marshall Ganz), we will all be equipped to participate in the dream:

Public narrative – how to tell stories to move others to join you in collective action;

Relationship-building – how to explore and make mutual commitments around shared values and interests;

Team-building – how to build teams with a clear purpose that are stable, motivated, and accountable;

Strategy – how to create a clear, compelling plan for turning the resources you have into the power you need to make the change you want;

Action – how to design events that achieve measurable goals, expand resources, and develop individual leadership.

Yes, beloved, I am dreaming a dream—of we. A dream for you, for Medford and for Jesus. Please join us next week for more about how we might be this we!

With blessing and prayer, Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade/revwdmiller@comcast.net/617.592.5853

IN OUR PRAYERS AND PASTORAL CARE



Concerns: We pray for Tom C. for relief from chronic neck pain and successful cataract surgery May 1; for Susan C. who has pneumonia; all who are struggling from addiction; Jeff S. in his search for a job and help from his resource group; for family and friends of Brianna a high school classmate of Kylie's, who died in a car accident and for all who grieve; for family, friends, and our communities at the death of 2 Boston firefighters, especially Joan and all mothers of those who serve; all firefighters, police and first responders who are

preparing for this year's marathon security; comfort and strength for June, as she deals with her illness; both joy and concern for Anita's niece Verena, who recently had a baby, but is worried about caring for her newborn and toddler as she experiences going blind from degenerative eye disease.

We continue to pray for Jenna N. and friends who lost their beloved friend Ashish at age 25 to cancer; Bruce R's sister going through eye surgery on both eyes; a friend Willie going through cancer surgery on April 5; for Jeff dealing with disappointment about his job search; Joy's friend Sheila in treatment; Joy's aging parents who struggle with physical and emotional issues and her brother Paul and his wife's struggles; for students with applications for college; for Louise W. who has been invited to the National honor society); for those lost in the Malaysian airplane disaster; for college students looking for summer jobs and internships; the situation in the Ukraine; those caring for the elderly; all affected by memory loss and dementia a growing concern in our country; a client of Kathy W's released from prison and facing the inevitable challenges—may he remain on the path of wellness; Dick S's friend Ed who is now diagnosed with stage 4 cancer; Mary B. who had a fall and is short term rehab.

Joys: We celebrate Rad Yarjian's ministry with us today and pray for his full recovery from a brief illness; Kathy W. lifts us the joy of our church's journey, knowing that "Even though our building is for sale, our church is not."; we continue to celebrate our exploration and the work of our leadership team; the crystalizing of our future that seems to be taking shape

We continue to pray for both the joy and grief associated with our decision to sell our building; Joy's continued recovery from surgery; Kathy W's sister Annette in recovery; for those preparing for the Marathon; Joy and her family at the loss of an aunt; Anita's family as they negotiate her mother's transition; Charlene C. and her family as they walk with her brother Lou who is in hospice care; Sheridan, who is recovering from surgery and Susan caring for her; the people in Ukraine to find a peaceful solution; for June L; our congregation, as we experiment with new possibilities; for all suffering from addiction; all who are caring for elderly parents; Bruce R.'s brother Bill in early recovery; our sexton Steve's daughter and grandson; the UCC 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; for our beloved elders at home: Eva W., June L., Thelma T., Tom C. We remember fallen soldiers, 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 requests to office@medfordchurch.org by noon Wed.*

Pastoral Care Concerns: The Deacon of the Month for March is Ose Manheim who can be reached

OUR CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

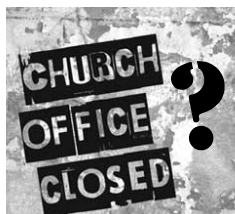
at (photose@comcast.net). The Deacon of the Month for April is Julie Roberts who can be reached at (heronjulie@yahoo.com). Please let the deacon of the month know if there is someone who could use a visit, phone call, card, or prayer. The Deacons (aka: Spiritual Life) rely on your input about the well being and needs of our members and friends. Rev. Wendy can be reached: revwdmiller@comcast.net.

Happy April Birthdays

23 Randall Kromm
 24 Debbie DiSciullo
 24 Brian Dorrance
 26 Janet Morey
 27 Eva Wagner



Help Needed for April Office Coverage!!



g to Disney World (YAY!) on holiday with her family and will be out of the office from April 16 through April 25. We still need coverage for the following days: Friday, April 18; Tuesday, April 22; Wednesday, April 23; and Friday, April 25. Can you help?

Empty your Pockets in the Pennies from Heaven Jar!

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). You are also welcome to call the church office to volunteer.

Altar Flowers Always Welcomed: Please contact Brenda Briggs bgriggs51@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.

Still Plenty of Closet Cleaning To Do!! Volunteers are needed for cleaning out the church closets: Kathy Williams is leading this effort to “clean out our closets.” 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.



Please Join Rev. Wendy for “Palms for Passersby” Palm Sunday, April

13—8:00 to 9:00 am and again after worship. *Please join Rev. Wendy in Passing out Eco-Palms to our neighbors and passersby! Let's offer the gift of this symbol of our faith to all!*



Eco-Palms



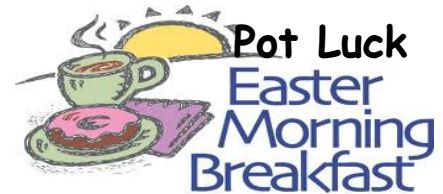
MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM
Sanctuary

Easter Sunday, April 20—Pot Luck Easter Breakfast

8:30 am in Fellowship Hall

Please contact Julie Roberts to sign up for A Breakfast Entrée
(French toast casserole or quiche); Fruit or Pastry/Breads.
heronjulia@yahoo.com



Help with Hunt? Contact Jenny
Briggs : jbriggs85@gmail.com

Celebrate Easter Worship

**10:00 am in the
Sanctuary**



Wednesday Worship and Study: Online Via Fuze Meeting **'Nooma®' Films and Discussion** **Led by Rev. Wendy, reflection by Rob Bell**

Nooma is a series of short films,
(10 minute-ish) about God and our lives.

Like parables, they use the experiences of our lives to teach about the fullness of life through Jesus, tackling issues like forgiveness, discipleship, and unconditional love. The study materials accompanying each NOOMA encourage meaningful discussion with relevant questions and biblical references.

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*Wednesday April 9—No Online Worship, Join Ministry Team Meeting at Church*

*Wednesday, April 16—Online Worship and Discussion*

**Note: Thursday, April 17—Maundy Thursday Worship at Church**

*Wednesday, April 23—Online Worship and Discussion*

*Wednesday, April 30—Online Worship and Discussion*

*For more information about this exciting online ministry, contact Rev. Wendy.*

*ALL are welcome, tell your friends.*

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

### **Worlds of Change: The Outdoor Church: Don't forget to collect your pocket change!**

During Lent we are participating in the Outdoor Church's "Worlds of Change" fundraiser. We simply ask that at the end of each day to take your spare change and place it in the box we passed out a couple of weeks ago. It may not feel like a lot, but when combined with the contributions of hundreds of individuals from other congregations, these small daily contributions can make a world of change for the chronically homeless men and women of Cambridge. After Easter, someone from the Outdoor Church will pick up the boxes, count the change, and send us an announcement celebrating how much we as a congregation raised. Thank you for your commitment to the homeless men and women in our community.



arlington  
international  
film  
festival

'Where Arlington and the World Converge'

Presents...

### **KIND HEARTED WOMAN**

*by acclaimed filmmaker David Sutherland*

who will be present for a discussion following the screening

**Sunday, April 6, 2014, 4:00 P.M.**

The Congregational Church of West Medford  
United Church of Christ, 400 High Street, Medford

An unforgettable portrait of Robin Charboneau, a 32-year old divorced single mother and Oglala Sioux woman living on North Dakota's Spirit Lake Reservation. Sutherland follows Robin over three years as she struggles to raise her two children, further her education, heal herself from the wounds of sexual abuse she suffered as a child and fulfill her goal of returning to her reservation to help prevent the abuse of women and children. This personal story allows us entree into the process of the tribal court and sexual abuse on the reservation. "As in my other films profiling rural poverty," says Sutherland, "I was trying to reach out to another forgotten corner of the American landscape, this time to put a face on a Native family so that we could see them close-up with all the detail that illuminates the rich reality of their lives." <http://itvs.org/films/kind-hearted-woman>

Tickets sold at the door \$10.00

Dinner will be available for a nominal fee—to support the church's ministry with Pine Ridge Reservation  
*A partnership with Medford Arts Center & CCWM, UCC*

*Please invite your friends and family to this wonderful opportunity*



## NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE UCC

### **Save the Date: ONA Churches at Pride Weekend, June 14**

The 44th annual Boston Pride Parade and Festival is Saturday, June 14 (same day as the MACUCC Annual Meeting in Sturbridge). MA Conference ONA churches typically march as a delegation. Spectators enjoy our rhythm band, welcoming chants AND big numbers. They are excited to see so many churches that welcome LGBTQ/same gender loving people. This year's theme is "Be Yourself - Change the World." Sounds very UCC, don't you think? We register as one marching delegation—with **one large parade banner (no individual church banners)** and each ONA church carries a small, commercially made sign bearing the name of the church. Volunteers needed to represent our congregation for this important witness! Deadline to sign up to March with the Conference group is May 8. See [www.bostonpride.org](http://www.bostonpride.org). **Can you volunteer to represent CCWM??**

**The Fabulous and Ecumenical Pride Morning Worship at 10am at Old South Church UCC, will celebrate 10 years of Equal Marriage!!!**

### **Adult Music Camp, July 24-27, 2014: Craigville Conference**

**Center:** Join other musically minded Christian adults for the opportunity to spend a long weekend making beautiful music together. We will worship, rehearse, relax, and enjoy fellowship with one another. On Sunday afternoon we will share our talents in a concert. All participants are expected to sing in the choir. And all of this takes place at the beautiful setting of Craigville with access to the beach, walking trails and a peaceful environment. Come alone or bring a friend. Minimum age is 18. Cost per person \$360.00 (includes 10 meals and linens); \$70.00 additional for the extra night (7/29). There will be a charge for music, to be determined, that will be collected during camp. A minimum non-refundable deposit of \$75.00 is required at the time of registration. For registration: <http://www.macucc.org/events/detail/1545>



### **Save the Date! 215th Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Conference:**

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.

## FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

### Join our own Louise Wilensky and "Boston Harmony" (World Music Choir) in Concert:



**Saturday, April 5 at 8:00 PM**  
at **Hancock UCC Church in Lexington, MA**  
1912 Massachusetts Avenue  
&  
**Friday, April 11 at 8:00 PM**  
at **First Baptist Church in Melrose, MA**  
561 Main Street

**Admission at the door is \$12 with \$8 for  
students and seniors**  
For further information call (802) 426-3210  
or email [villageharmony@gmail.com](mailto:villageharmony@gmail.com)

The concert program presents **South African** songs and dances, sacred and secular music from **Caucasus Georgia, Corsica** and **Bulgaria**, two dramatic **English West Gallery Anthems** by William Knapp, traditional and contemporary **American shape-note songs**, and **renaissance** Italian laudae.

More information about this intergenerational choir is available at the concerts or at  
[www.villageharmony.org](http://www.villageharmony.org).

Our own Elizabeth Reian Bennett  
joins members of the Tufts Music Department for a  
**World Music Concert**

**Sunday, Sunday, April 6 at 3PM**

featuring members of the world music program from  
the Tufts Music Department on the Japanese  
shakuhachi (Elizabeth Reian Bennett), koto (Cathleen  
Ayakano Read), Hidustani voice (Warren Senders),  
ethnic violin (Beth Bahia Cohen), middle eastern 'ud  
(Sal Barsamian), accordion (Michael McClaughlin)  
and banjo (Rich Stillman).

Distler Hall, Tufts University.  
Perry and Marty Granoff Music Center,  
20 Talbot Avenue, Medford, MA 02155  
Directions, PDFs & more:

<http://campusmaps.tufts.edu/medford/>

Information: [617.627.3679](tel:617.627.3679)

This is a free event.

### The City of Medford Police Department

Re: New Emergency Response Tool called "Smart 911". Medford Police are planning an informational meeting to explain Smart911, File of Life, and Connect CTY in more detail. There is an evening or afternoon forum to provide the details of these three programs and the police are willing to set up a date and time to personally come to your organization to explain these features that can be so helpful when every minute counts.

**Wednesday April 9, 2014 4:00-5:00 pm or  
Wednesday April 23, 2014 from 6:00-7:00 pm**

Medford City Hall in the 2nd floor  
Council Chambers. These meetings  
will not exceed an hour. If you  
need more information, please call  
Captain Barry Clemente at 781 391  
6414.

**Be Smart  
About Safety.**

**SIGN UP TODAY**

**Smart911.com**