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The Congregational Church of West Medford



God is Still Speaking,

An Open and Affirming Congregation
of the United Church of Christ

Third Sunday After Pentecost

June 29, 2014 at 10 o'clock am

For Reflection

“We Will No Longer Be a Welcoming Church” by Rob Moss



We've decided to quit being a welcoming church. No kidding. We're giving it up. It won't be easy, but we're committed to it. We'll have to do it in stages, easing our folks into it step by step. We'll have to deal with the fear of something new, the challenge of venturing into the unknown. But we'll do it. It will take motivation, leadership, and constant reminders. But most importantly, it will take total commitment in embracing a new focus.

Like so many churches, we've sunk an amazing amount of time and energy into becoming a welcoming church. We changed worship styles, we trained greeters and ushers, we wore name tags, we percolated coffee, we went to workshops on hospitality, we put our friendliest people in the most prominent places on Sunday mornings. But we've realized we've been misplacing our emphasis. So we're no longer going to do it.

Here's what we're doing instead. We are becoming an Inviting Church. That's different. You see, "welcoming" from a missional perspective is passive. It denotes waiting for visitors and guests to drop by. When they do, we attempt to treat them very well and do everything possible to make them comfortable. We'll be willing to change who we are. We'll follow particular formats that have proven to be more welcoming to new people. We'll do whatever it takes to have them come back the next Sunday, even if they shouldn't. Welcoming is about us, not about them.

"Inviting," however, is different. That means we leave the comfort of our congregational home-court advantage. The main activity doesn't happen in our worship space when people drop in, but in the neighborhood when we go out. It isn't so much welcoming them into our place, but going out into their place and meeting them there.

Even that warrants a significant caveat. This is not just another gimmick to get people into the church. The foundation of this isn't an attempt to bolster declining membership rolls and make a better parochial report to the bishop. No, it goes much deeper than that. It starts with who God has called us to be as church. It involves discovering our gifts and purpose. And it mandates joining God at work in the world. This isn't about getting the world into God's church; it's about getting the church into God's world.

If you've read any postings on this blog before, you know that God's mission is what we are to be about. Everything comes from that – including the identity of the church. We exist as church only because God has a mission. Our purpose, our very identity, is called forth out of God's lov-

WELCOME

The Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ is in a time of transformation as we move toward God's new direction for our ministry and our future. Thank you for your patience with and your participation in our experimentation and exploration.

We extravagantly welcome all people; believers, non-believers, doubters, questioners, no matter who they love, their gender identity or expression, their race, culture, ability, or economic circumstance. All are a blessing to our journey of faith and we seek to share God's love and grace with all.

We pray that you might meet God here today—and connect with another seeking the same. We invite you to participate in the acts of worship that work for you and encourage you should you choose not to participate in others.

Prayers of the People: Joys and concerns are often offered openly as an act of worship. Our pastor and deacons pray these requests through the week. You are also welcome to request prayer via the blue sheet in your bulletin, leaving it in the offering plate or with the pastor or a deacon. Please note if any requests are confidential.

GATHERING TO PRAISE GOD

Prelude

Adagio

—Bruckner

Welcome

Church Life and Mission

*Opening Hymn “Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life”

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Call to Worship

Julie Roberts

One: Welcome to all who are weary, tired, or burned-out.

All: We come to be refreshed and renewed in God's presence.

One: Welcome all who are anxious, worried, or burdened.

All: We come to be calmed and comforted by the Spirit.

One: Welcome to all who feel complacent, comfortable, or detached.

All: We come to be stirred by Christ's message for us.

One: All are welcome here. Come as you are.

All: Together, we will rest in God's presence,

be calmed by the Spirit,

and be stirred by Christ's message.

Together we will welcome one another as we gather for worship.

* Please rise in body or spirit as you are able

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Connecting with God

Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade

Invocation ~ Invitation

Preparing our Hearts

**“Breathe On Me,
Breath of God”**

—Trentham

Breathe on me breath of God, fill me with life anew
That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.

Prayer of Preparation and Confession

Silence

*Words of Assurance of God’s Presence and Forgiveness

One: ...the Good News is simple: God’s love is not going anywhere:
God’s love is real; God’s love is deep; God’s love is everywhere.

All: *Hallelujah! Thanks be to our awesome God!*

*Passing of the Peace

Sung Celebration

Sweet, Sweet, Spirit

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There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;
There are sweet expressions on each face,
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

Chorus:

Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,
Stay right here with us, filling us with Your love.
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived,
When we shall leave this place. (repeat chorus)

PROCLAIMING GOD’S WORD

The Word with God’s Beloved Children

Prayers of the People

Our worship includes an open prayer time today.

You are also invited to write your prayers on the blue prayer sheet in your bulletin and place them in the offering plate later in the service. Please note if confidential.

The Lord's Prayer (You are welcome to pray in the language most familiar to you)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love" # 498

From the Bible Matthew 10: 40—24 Julie Roberts

Sermon IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Offering Julie Roberts

Invitation to Joyful Stewardship

Offertory *Waltz* —Lehar

***Procession of Gifts**

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, comforter; One God, true, whom we adore. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Closing Song "Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?" # 539

Benediction

Postlude *Confidence* —Mendlessohn



All are welcome to a time of fellowship
immediately after worship in Barnes Chapel.

WORSHIP AT THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WEST MEDFORD

June 29 Third Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship

God has an extravagant love and welcome for all of us. The loving welcome, shown in Matthew 10:40–42, shows us how we can be in community together. This warm welcome encourages us to go beyond what is comfortable and go into our communities showing God's love.

*The Altar Flowers are given by Jean Hinds-Johnson,
in memory of Florence Haynes.*

Special thanks today to:

Our Liturgist for today, Julie Roberts

Karen McCune Barca for-ever being the set-up and clean-up maven.

The Deacon of the Month for June is Brenda Briggs (bgbriggs51@gmail.com)

The Deacon of the Month for July is Ose Manheim

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### **Sunday, July 6, Fourth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

This Sunday will be a lay lead service.

We will not celebrate communion July 6.

### **Sunday, July 13, Fifth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Rev. Wendy will return for July 13 worship and Holy Communion will be offered.

In Jesus' teaching in Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43, the parable about the Sower, he invites hope-filled trust in God. There is mystery in how God plants, nurtures, and weeds to secure a harvest of promise—nonetheless, the sower just keep sowing the seeds!

What does this say for us as we plant a new ministry!?

### **Sunday, July 20, Sixth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Rev. Matt Carricker, author of the soon to be released book, "Giving Christianity Back to Jesus";

Protestant Chaplain at Brandeis University and Founding Pastor of the UCC Church Plant:

AGAPE in Waltham will preach. See the vision for AGAPE: <http://www.backtojesusnow.com>

### **Sunday, July 27, Seventh Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Our beloved friend and former bridge pastor, Rev. Judy Brain will preach.

### **Sunday, August 03, Eighth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Preacher to be announced

### **Sunday, August 10, Ninth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Our beloved friend and former bridge pastor, Rev. Judy Brain will preach.

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ing care and redemptive activity in creation. We are steeped in God's mission. We are drenched through baptism into this essential character of God. God is at work in the world, and creates, calls, and equips the church specifically for that work.

Each congregation has a purpose within God's mission. Each congregation has particular gifts. Each congregation reveals the life-giving reign of God in unique ways. No congregation is everything to everyone. But every congregation is something to someone. Who can know God through your worship style? Who can experience forgiveness and grace through your congregational community? Who needs the gifts you have to offer? Who can offer gifts you need? Knowing those things, when in conversation over the backyard fence about their pain in losing a loved one, it would be natural then to invite that neighbor to your congregation's grief support group that has made such a difference for many others. When in the employee lunch room chatting about the pressures of our jobs, it would fit to invite that co-worker to your congregation's spiritual direction group for professionals. When sharing the struggles of parenthood with a friend while waiting for your kids to come out of school, it would make sense to invite their whole family to your cross-generational faith development where you have gained so much guidance from other parents. While paying for a car repair, your long-time mechanic lets slip that she has lost her faith, it would easily flow for you to invite her to join you (and all the other doubters who will gather this Sunday) in worship.

Welcoming involves hoping whoever happens to find you will join. Inviting involves sharing God's specific gifts – made real in your congregation – in the world.

*Rev. Dr. Robert G. Moss, Pastor, Lutheran Church of the Master, Lakewood, CO, USA. Used by permission.*

## **Please Note These Important Summer Changes**

### **Summer Church Council Date Changed To:**

Third Wednesday, July 16 – 7 pm and Fourth Wednesday, August 27 – 7 pm

### **Summer Staff Vacation**

Diane Petrelis will be out of the office for the first three weeks of July. (July 1—July 18).

Herman Weiss will be off from Sunday Worship on July 11, 20 and 27.

Rev. Wendy will be on vacation July 1—7; July 20—August 4; at a conference August 7—10 and off Sunday, August 31

**Volunteers Needed for Office Support—office will be closed Mon. & Fri. in July—can you help? Diane will be available by phone and email during the three weeks she is away.**

**Tues, July 1; Wed, July 2; Thurs, July 3.**

**Tues, July 8; Wed, July 9, Thurs, July 10.**

**Tues, July 15; Wed, July 16, Thurs, July 17.**

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## **THIS WEEK AT YOUR CHURCH**

### **June 29 Third Sunday After Pentecost**

Confirmation Kids at Heifer Farm  
Cleaning Out The Closets—9:30 am  
Sunday Worship Service (Sanctuary) 10:00 am  
Church of God of Redemption-Rev. Lucien Nere—Bean Chapel  
Tibetan Sunday School (Lower Level)—12:00 pm

#### Monday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am--6:15 am;  
8:15 am--9:00 am; 5:30 pm--6:15 pm (FH)  
Confirmation Kids at Heifer Farm  
Yoga—6:30 pm (FH)

#### Tuesday

Gamblers Anonymous—7:00 pm (BC)  
Gam-Anon—7:30 pm (YR)

#### Wednesday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am--6:15 am;  
8:15 am--9:00 am; 5:30 pm--6:15 pm (FH)  
Zumba—6:30 pm (FH)  
AA—8:00 pm (Youth)

#### Thursday

Zumba—6:30 pm (FH)

#### Friday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am--6:15 am;  
8:15 am--9:00 am; 5:30 pm--6:15 pm (FH)  
Church of God of Redemption—7:00 pm (Bean)

#### Saturday

Alanon— 9:00 am (YR)  
Yoga—9:00 am (FH)  
Boot Camp—12:15 pm (FH)

### **July 6, 2014 Fourth Sunday After Pentecost—10:00 am Worship**

Tibetan Sunday School (Lower Level)—12:00 pm  
Church of Redemption (Bean Chapel)—11:30 pm

*Room Legend: (BC) Barnes Chapel; (Bean) Bean Chapel; (DR) Dining Room; (LR) Living Room; (YR) Youth Room*

### **The Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ**

Ministers: All of us!

Organist and Choir Director: Dr. Herman Weiss

Co- Moderators: Paul Roberts & Rich Carle

Treasurer: Amanda Coughlin

Pastor and Teacher: Reverend Wendy Miller Olapade

Church Administrator: Diane Petrelis

Deacon for the Month of July: Ose Manheim

Clerk: Karen McCune Barca

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Rev. Wendy—[pastor@medfordchurch.org](mailto:pastor@medfordchurch.org)