

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

*True forgiveness is not an action after the fact,
it is an attitude with which you enter each moment*
—David Ridge (theartofforgiveness.org)

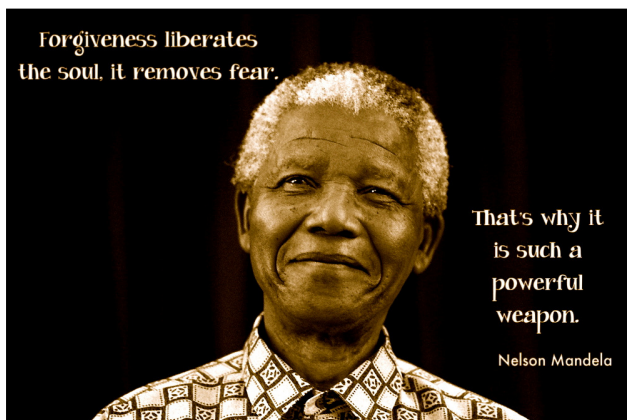
Please Forgive Me

Beloved,

This week's scripture readings engage the hardships of human relationships, and the enduring sense that forgiveness and truth are necessary components of honest lives. Joseph and his brothers move toward reconciliation, a psalmist proclaims the goodness of family harmony, Paul widens the circle to include both Jews and Gentiles, as does the woman who argues for her daughter's healing.

Forgiveness and truth—I am both heartened and heart-ached by the image for I find myself on the heels of the prophetically inspiring and spiritually powerful conference to which you sent me (thank you!!!) — asking for your forgiveness.

There is sooooo much I want to share with you from the workshop leaders and keynote speakers like Brian McLaren, Doug Paggit, Lisa Anderson, Mike Piazza and Cameron Trimble (just to name a few)! There is the very strong affirmation that we are on the right track, the rock star status that you have with these leading edge progressive church leaders as a result of your courage and bold decision, and the ideas gleaned for ways we will make a difference in the faith formation and transformation of people and our community with the kind of extravagant welcome and take-it-to-the-streets model for ministry we intend.



But first, I must ask your forgiveness. You see, another really important message I heard in Atlanta was this—if people of faith don't do something about the mess we human beings have gotten ourselves into we might as well pack it up and walk away from it all. If we don't unite and pull together to "make love not war" then what is it all about? If we don't see it as God's call, our mission to attend to "peace, poverty and the planet" well what are we doing it anyway?

So, just for today, I ask for your forgiveness—for

continued next page...

in the midst of all we have had to 'Do' I have not had the time or the courage to focus on the prophetic way we need to "Be." I do not ask in regards to the time—we all have a finite amount of time, and I work more than I should. But I do repent for my fear. Because in the midst of the impossibly complex Israel-Palestine mess; the horrible genocide happening all over the place; the modern day atrocity of human trafficking; war machines shooting airplanes out of the sky; the unacceptable racism that continues to haunt people of color in our own country (especially black males); the damage we are doing to our exhaustible resources and God's glorious creation, our planet; and the injustice of our economic systems (to name a few)—I have been silent. I have been overwhelmed by the complexity of it all and afraid I would look like I was not well informed (who could be?). I have failed to dialogue with those with whom I do not share the same opinion for fear I would make an enemy of someone about whom I care. I have privileged unity and being nice over doing the right thing.

Blogger, [Sandhya Jha wrote in an article](#) this week in response to the shooting and killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, that we confuse unity with comfort. "my friend's church broke her heart because unity is almost always unconsciously driven by the dominant culture's lived experience and very rarely by an awareness that acts of injustice against some communities do not happen in isolation but as part of a pattern. I am tired of the church breaking my family's heart... **I am tired of the church unconsciously and unintentionally choosing unity but really choosing comfort.** I am tired of the church unconsciously choosing comfort in the face of tragedy that should be breaking all of our hearts. **Every twenty-eight hours a Black man is killed by police in the United States.**"

Beloved, I am tired too. I am tired of being so careful that I end up being silent on the very things that Jesus told us to challenge. I am tired of taking the easier way and tired of wondering what the world will be like (or even if there will be a world) for my grandchildren.

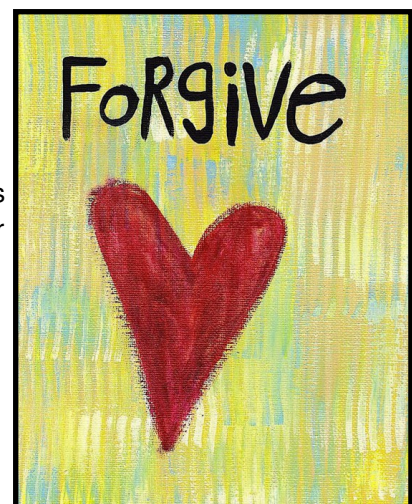
So forgive me, God and forgive me church. I want to preach the gospel. I want to be more prophetic, I want to change the world, I want to make a way where there is no way—not just for each of us individually, but for our grandchildren and their grandchildren. I want there to be justice and compassion for all of God's creation. I want there to be peace for all of God's creation. I want there to be economic justice for all of God's creation. And I want black boys and girls to be valued and treated the same as white boys and girls—NOW, in my lifetime.

I want to be a part of the solution and I believe Jesus laid out the way. Maybe if we are lucky, I'll be asking your forgiveness again soon—for as I step up to the pulpit to prophesy, as I proclaim the gospel from this platform to which you have called me, I will not always do it perfectly or gracefully and will surely piss somebody off! But I would rather ask for forgiveness for bumbling than to remain muted by my fear.

With blessing and prayer and a new found courage,

Rev, Wendy (617-592-5853/revwdmiller@comcast.net)

Concerns: We pray for Paul's best friend's daughter Rebecca, who just started to receive chemo therapy; Dick's friends Ed who struggles



IN OUR PRAYERS AND PASTORAL CARE



with Lou Gehrig's disease who will seek a nursing home while his housemate goes in for surgery and Paul who has an illness. Wendy's father and her family; Thelma moved to Sunrise in Arlington; that members would visit and send cards; the friends and family members lost in yet another act of violence; for Ernestine's adjustment to her nursing home and her families adjustment to the change - including for Dick and Jeff; Jeff prayers for mother in nursing home and for Revere residents impacted by tornado, Bev prayer for discernment how we as a faith community can support the

Revere victims of the tornado, and for people to treasure their teenagers; prayers and help for June while Kim is on vacation; and Carvina prays for guidance when dealing with family situations. Ose prayers for family traveling to Canada; Ana - prayers of healing for her cat Bosco. ; for June L. for strength, courage and recovery; for Kim G. and her family for strength for the challenge of caring for June; for Eva W. at home; for God to make a way for reconciliation where there seems to be no way; all who struggle with addictions; Tom C. for relief from chronic neck pain; Sheila in treatment; a brother Paul and his wife's struggles; those caring for the elderly; .

Joys: We celebrate with gratitude Jeff - joy for volunteer opportunities; Kathy - for joyful childhood memories of her grandmother "Leaning on the ever lasting arms" - "Weanies on the everlasting arms"; Ose - for wonderful lunch with Tom; Julie - Kim returned from vacation and appreciated all those who supported June while she was away; June - appreciated the phone calls and welcomes more.; Paul - prayer of thanks that the Purchase & Sale was signed; Carol and Joe's daughter earned a promotion in her paralegal position; joy that Robin's daughter will be with her a few more weeks and that she had completed her teaching internship with inner-city children; the Heifer Global Village Trip; Contractor's Vinny and Deno and their staff who are building our new home with love and creativity; Drew and Tripp's grandmother's summer visit; our future; the courage with which we are facing the future and the hand God has had in it all.

We continue to pray for Charlene's family as they walk with her brother Lou who is in hospice care; all in recovery; 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 August is Karen McCune Barca who can be reached at karenmccunebarca@gmail.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.

OUR CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fellowship Hour Help Needed: Can you bring some goodies to support our easy-peasy summer fellowship time? Please contact Karen (karenmccunebarca@gmail.com).

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. Ose Manheim and Julie Roberts are the contacts at this time. You are also welcome to call the church office to volunteer.

Altar Flowers Always Welcomed: Please contact Brenda Briggs 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.

Happy August Birthday

7 Herman Weiss
7 Shealyn Maloney
9 Irving McDowell
21 Beverly Roche
29 Albert Howell
31 Camille Mary Kromm



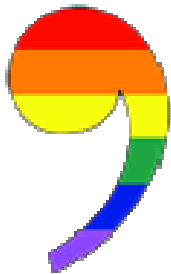
**Next Sunday, August 24
10 am Worship &
Pot Luck Picnic Brunch
at the Parsonage!
Rain or shine!**



**105 Brooks Street, Medford
Bring a brunch or lunch item to share**

Save the Date:

Never Turning Back: Celebrating 30 Years of ONA (Nov. 8 in Boxborough)



ONA began with a 1984 MACUCC resolution (via Church of the Covenant in Boston) which was brought to the UCC's general synod the following year. Since the first ONA listing published in 1987, there have been nearly 1200 ONA churches.

Save the date for this celebration with speakers The Rev. Ann B. Day (National Coordinator of the ONA Program from 1987-2007) and Felix Carrion (the former Director of the UCC's Still Speaking Ministry). Watch for more: www.macucc.org/lgbt

MISSION AND OUTREACH

September 5, 2014 (2—8 pm)

**Ministry Center Open House and Blessing of the Back Packs
With CWS School Kits for Kids—Service Project, Ice Cream Social &
Networking for “FormingFaith.net”**

We are planning an open house and our first new ministry center moment during the first week of school! We will invite families all over Medford to collect items for CWS School Kits and ask them to bring their donations to our ministry center over the course of an afternoon where kids will have a chance to “build a kit”, craft a note to include in the kit (we will send them to CWS); have their own back-packs, laptops, tablets and school year blessed and share in an ‘Ice Cream Social’.

This will also be an opportunity to network and connect with families and share our Faith Formation in the Home Ministry which you can now see online at www.FormingFaith.net.

To assemble a CWS School Kit you will need:

- One pair of blunt metal scissors (rounded tip)
- Three 70-count spiral notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (**no loose-leaf or filler paper**)
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One hand-held pencil sharpener
- One large eraser
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One box of 24 crayons (only 24)
- One 12" x 14" to 14" x 17" finished size cotton or lightweight canvas bag with cloth handles. (**Please, no reusable shopping bags or backpacks.**)
- Pack all items inside the cloth bag (pattern for bag is on website)



We will also need to raise the \$ 2.00 per kit for shipping to send along to CWS! More on the kits:
<http://www.cwsglobal.org/get-involved/kits/school-kits.html>

Here is what we need from you!

- 1) Schedule the day—all ages are welcome.
- 2) Buys something for the school kits
- 3) Offer to help at the center with scooping ice cream, helping kids create, welcoming guests
- 4) Offer to join Rev. Wendy and Rev. Tom and Minister Eva on Wed, Sept 3 and Thur, Sept 4 to “Leaflet” families outside of Brooks School
- 5) Watch for an email with all these details and share the invitation with friends and family and face-book/Twitter!!!! Bring a friend!!!

Sunday, August 31
Outdoor Church Sandwiches
We love this project!!!

Yeah, yeah it seemed like just last month that we made sandwiches. That's because it kind of was. Strange little twist of the calendar.

Please join in making sandwiches and helping with the prep or delivery.

Contact Elizabeth Bennett if you can help with shopping or delivery.

Always room for more at the prep table! After worship in the kitchen.



Save the Date and Plan to Participate
Medford Community Day
September 21, 2014 (1:00—4:00 pm)

The community day is designed to celebrate Medford's wild, wonderful diversity, create a chance for neighbors to meet and know each other and build community. There will be music, food, fun... schools, churches, community groups.

It is a perfect venue for building visibility and sharing our vision for the future with our friends and neighbors in Medford.

We plan to be present, to have a tent/table, hand out brochures about our new ministries, sign people up for FormingFaith.net, say something about Pine Ridge and...
the rest is up to you.

What might we bring, offer, say, project, be, or do that will represent the new ministry we are planting and the ways we want to be God's hands and feet in the world?



Do you have a tent?

Can you:

- be part of a planning team?**
- being present and smile?**
- share our story with our neighbors?**

Contact Rev. Wendy

FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Call Kenneth Keel, 781-249- 2828 or Vee, 857-261-0287 for tickets

**The West Medford Community Center &
The West Medford Community Spirit
Present**

Labor Day at Dugger Park

Sunday, August 31, 2014

12 pm – 6 pm

- * Hot Dogs, Burgers, Chicken, Chips & Beverages
- * Cotton Candy
- * 50/50 Raffle
- * Music
- * Family & Friends
- * Basketball Tournament
- * Races
- * Pony Rides
- * Water Balloon Toss
- * Tug of War
- * Round the River Race
- * Moonwalks
- * Face Painting
- * Dunk Tanks & More!



Thanks to our sponsors:

- * Risman Insurance Agency of Medford
- * West Medford Lobster Fest



NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE UCC

Registration Open for Super Saturday—October 25, 2014

(Last Spring the event sold out with over 650 participants—Register Now!!)

New Location!! Keefe Regional Technical High School, 750 Winter Street, Framingham MA. Presented by the The Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences of the United Church of Christ. Join hundreds of pastors and lay leaders from across two Conferences for worship, workshops, forums, networking and a marketplace!

Featuring The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Director of the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries—Jaramillo is responsible for the church's work on human rights and social, racial and economic justice. She is a former president and vice-president of the Council for Hispanic Ministries and former co-convener of the Council of Racial and Ethnic Ministries. She will give the message during morning worship and also offer a lunchtime forum.

48 Workshops with a chance for two workshops and lunchtime dialogues; a marketplace with SERRVE, books, mission partners and more. Go to the conference home page to register and see a description of all the workshop topics: www.macucc.org

Here are a few titles to pique your interest: A Creative Worship Journey ~ Advent through Pentecost ; Be The Change - The Nonviolent Response ; Going Up River: Working for Systemic Change ; Healthy Communication in Churches and Life ; Honest Encounters with the "Spiritual but Not Religious" ; I Was In Prison and You Visited Me ; I've Answered the Call of Church Leadership—Now What? ; Joyful Noise: Celebrating and Reinvigorating Your ONA Ministry ; Leave No Parishioner Behind! ; The Myths and Realities of the Latino/a/Hispanic-American: A Challenge and Opportunity for the UCC ; Talking About Faith and Money: Preaching and Testimony ; The Ethical Edges of Baptism ; We Can Do All Things Through Christ: Becoming an Innovative Church: Part 1

And these are just some of the morning sessions—you really need to be at this event.

Let's get a large group of people attending and learn from lay and clergy alike.

**Andover Newton
Theological School**

**Please join us
for the Presidential
Inauguration of The
Rev. Martin B. Copenhagen**



**Oct. 5, 2014, 3:00 pm
Reception to Follow**

**Old South Church
645 Boylston Street
Boston**

*RSVP by Sept 1, Marjorie Bell
617.831.2411 or mbell@ants.edu*