

Second Annual Wine Tasting Gala

Please join us for the **Second Annual UCC Wine Tasting Event** on **Saturday, April 30, at 6:30 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. This year's theme will be "Wines from the Mediterranean" and the dinner will be catered by Mediterranean Grill, as well as delicious dessert from the Women's Guild.

Last year's inaugural dinner was a big hit and lots of fun. This year promises to be as much fun with the net proceeds going to support the UCC Head to Toe Hygiene Pantry. Tickets will be on sale for \$50 per person beginning April 1st. You may make individual or group* reservations through the church office. We must have an exact headcount, so we are sorry that we cannot accept walk-ins on the night of the event. Whitney Post will again be the "wine expert" to teach us more about the wines. Seating will be limited, so please make your reservations early.

*An entire table of either six or eight people qualifies as a "group".

Outreach News

BREAK 4 KIDS WONDERFUL NEWS

As you know, UCC has been invited to share in the Break 4 Kids Project in order to help those families who will struggle providing food to their children during Spring Break.

University Congregational Church has once again amazed others with their generosity. At this writing, 24 boxes of the supplies have been delivered to the Kansas Food Bank along with a check for \$1,229.00 to help fill 48 additional boxes. Your caring response has been amazing, and the Outreach Board would like to thank you for your kindness and caring.



universitycongregationalchurch

9209 E. 29th Street North · Wichita, KS 67226
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Holy Week

Palm Sunday Egg Hunt
April 17th, following the service

Maundy Thursday Service
April 21st, 6:00 pm
Please sign up in Fellowship Hall or call the church office to make a reservation so we know how many dinners to order.

Easter Sunday Service
April 24th, 10:30 am
▪ Brass trio playing
▪ Choir will sing selections from the Messiah.

Be Included submit news items by Friday., April 22nd to Julie Baker: julie4design@gmail.com

Go Green if you prefer to receive an e-newsletter as a PDF each month, let us know: cathy@ucchurch.org

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Steeple Notes

universitycongregationalchurch

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Where head & heart are partners in faith.

April 2011



News from the Belfry

Join us for the **Maundy Thursday** dinner and service which will be held in Fellowship Hall on April 21st at 6 p.m.

We will share a meal, have a meaningful service and enjoy special music. Children are invited to attend. There will be child care provided, for babies and toddlers. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall. There will be a free will offering to cover the cost of dinner.

Yours in faith,
Gary

Moderator's Message

by Becki Herod

There is no doubt that University Congregational Church is in the midst of a difficult transition. The Council has heard that you are especially concerned about how we improve our understanding of congregationalism and how decisions are made at UCC. Before we can talk about a five-year plan, or a marketing plan, or a search committee for an Associate Minister, we need to assess who we are as a congregation and the processes that we will use to make decisions. What do our Constitution and Bylaws say we are and how effective is our governance structure? What have we learned in the last month and how will we walk together into the future?

Your Church Council met this past Sunday, March 13 and discussed this very issue. It had also been discussed in the Boards of Outreach and Deacons. It was approved by strong consensus that we should bring in a helping hand to walk us through this process. We made the decision to invite the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches to send a consultant to help us work through the current issues and discern the steps we can take to strengthen our congregational processes. When we talked about joining the NA

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last summer we discussed the advantages of membership. Such a service is one of those advantages. I have spoken to Dr. Betsy Mauro who is the Dean for the Center for Congregational Leadership. Dr. Mauro has agreed to come to our church and walk us through this process. She will arrive on Sunday, April 3 and will spend time visiting with members of our congregation on Monday and Tuesday, April 4 & 5. We will have times available for members of our congregation to speak to Dr. Mauro in small groups and I hope you will make yourself available during one of those times. Please contact the office for more information on available times. I hope that you will commit yourself to providing feedback, listening, and learning from her experience. The process will be very transparent and the report and findings or suggestions that come from her visit will be unaltered and shared with our congregation.

Why the NACCC and How much is this going to cost us? Both are very fair questions. First of all, we felt that we need someone who has no vested interest and is not emotionally involved in the current situation. Second, a good consultant is going to be looking at institutional patterns of behavior and allow us to see how we work as an organization. A consultant from the National Association is someone who will understand how congregational churches are organized and how they conduct business. There is a "congregational way" of being church that is distinct from Presbyterian or Methodist governance. What would it hurt for us to have a disinterested Congregationalist look at our bylaws, policies, and procedures and suggest ways that we can be more effective and inclusive? Dr. Mauro will not be in the position of requiring us to do anything. We can take or leave her insights, wisdom, and suggestions. We believe that we will come out of this process as a stronger church and a kinder people. Now to the cost... As I said earlier, this is a service provided by the NACCC for all of its member churches. We are not required to pay for her time and talents, only her travel expenses. And those travel expenses have been covered through a generous private donation. They will not come out of our operating budget.

University Congregational Church is a unique and special place. It is my hope and prayer that we can come together as a group and work to find a resolution and a way to make our wonderful church an even better place. The only way we can do this is for each of you to get involved. Please get involved in the process we have laid out for you with Dr. Mauro. And please take the advice of many who spoke out this past Sunday - assume leadership positions, get involved with our youth programs, and don't sit idle in the pews. We need you.

You could be a winner!

WG Women's Guild

The Women's Guild will be selling raffle tickets for two lovely hand-knit baby blankets made by Kay Sommerfeld and donated to the Guild. These beautiful blankets represent hours of work and are exquisite. They would make wonderful gifts. The first blanket, titled "Sticks, Bees, and Fleas," is off-white, knitted in several patterns, measuring 36" by 44", and made of 50% nylon and 50% acrylic weighted yarn. The second blanket is a lavender child's blanket/lap afghan knitted in a lattice pattern with fringe on the ends, made of 100% acrylic yarn, measuring 48" wide and 58" long. Both blankets are machine washable and dryable.

The blankets will be on display in Fellowship Hall, and raffle tickets will be sold after church on all of the Sundays in April. The raffle will be held the first of May. You can purchase one ticket for \$5.00 or 5 tickets for \$20.00. The proceeds of the raffle go for the annual baby shower for underprivileged mothers. The baby baskets are assembled by the Guild every October. They contain baby clothes, bibs, sleepwear, diapers, lotions, wipes, and receiving blankets sewn by guild ladies. They are decorated by the Guild Ladies and distributed to a number of organizations who give the baskets to needy mothers who have newborns.

**Head-To-Toe
HYGIENE PANTRY**

The Hygiene Pantry has been experiencing growing pains. Because we are now serving over 500 families a month, we have had to

make some hard decisions; either limit the number of people we serve or offer them less products. We decided to operate on a \$2,000.00 a month budget and give out 6 items instead of 8 to each visitor. On this budget we will be open another 4 months. We do have more grants written and have a couple of fund raisers coming up.

Many thanks to Dawn Jester and her fellow employees at One Call Concepts for collecting product and volunteering the last two Saturdays.

Also, a very big thank you to Jerry Becker and crew from Snow White Carpet Cleaning for coming in last week to clean the carpet in the pantry and waiting area. It looks so much better. Thank you, Jerry!

We continue to run short on size 4, 5, and 6 diapers. We have found that the "company brands" at Wal-Mart, Target, or Dillons are quite nice and much cheaper than the major brands.

Thank you to each of you who are continuing to help in any way at the pantry. Your kindness and sharing with others is appreciated so much!

Social Scene

Men's Group Lunch

Meets the 3rd Thursday each month.

Thursday, April 21st. at 11:30 am at Louie's Grill & Bar, 9747 East 21st St. North (Webb & 21st). Let us know if you need a ride. Sign up in Fellowship Hall or call the church office.

WG Women's Guild

Wednesday, May 4th, 2011 at Noon

All UCC women are welcome to attend!! The last meeting of the school year before the Guild summer recess. Members of the Guild Board will furnish a salad luncheon. The \$7 charge for the luncheon will be donated to the Head to Toe Hygiene Pantry. We hope to see you there! Social time takes place between 12:00 and 12:30, and lunch is served at 12:30. Please call Rosie Howell at 652-7985 for reservations.

Cook's Night Out - Special May Preview - Save the Date!

Wednesday, May 18th

Social Time 6:00pm; Buffet begins at 6:30pm

Cooks Night Out for May (none in April) is **Music Theatre Summer 2011 by Wayne Bryan**. This is always big, so mark your calendars now! Fellowship Hall Cost: Adult \$15.00 children(Ages 4-10) \$5.00 Sign up in Fellowship Hall or call the office for your reservation. Child Care provided.

IT'S TIME FOR THE EASTER LILLIES! If you are interested in donating for our Easter floral display, please mail \$12.00 to the church office by April 18th or put your check in the offering plate. Please note "Easter flowers" on the memo line of your check and include if the donation is in honor of or in memory of someone.

News from the future...our youth

by Becki Herod

I know that the concern for many of you has been for our youth. I am so glad to hear so many offer that concern and support. Many volunteers are all working very hard to make sure that our youth are cared for and the fun activities that they were looking forward to are as unchanged as possible. Thank you again for all those who have offered their time and talents to support these programs, and if there are others who would still like to offer that support, please let me know.

★ **Sunday School** - Our Sunday School classes have been and will continue to take place. Megan Lovely, who was previously in the Toddler Room, is now teaching in the grade school/K-5 classroom with the help of Lauren Hirsch, our Youth Music Director. They are doing a wonderful job and it was fun to see a big group of grade schoolers having a lot of fun this past Sunday. Deanna Wells is continuing to teach in the middle school room. Deanna has a fabulous attitude and a true passion for our children. We are very lucky to have her. And Peter and Crystal DeVries have agreed to teach in our high school classroom. Peter and Crystal are both high school teachers and we are extremely lucky to have them teach that class.

- ★ **Confirmation** - The Confirmation trip and classes following will take place as planned, and we have several youth who are signed up as well as several confirmed sponsors.
- ★ **Easter Egg Hunt** - Please come for the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 17. It will take place as planned.
- ★ **Mother's Day** - The children will be singing on Mother's Day and they will be serving refreshments and handing out carnations to the mothers after the service.
- ★ **Youth Sunday** - Youth Sunday has been moved to May 22 and will be in tandem with Confirmation Sunday. Lauren Hirsch will be working with the kids to prepare music for this event.
- ★ **Summer Heifer Ranch Trip** - The summer Heifer Ranch trip will still take place and we have a volunteer coordinating with youth who are interested in going on the trip. Our youth will still need your support in upcoming fundraising efforts, which we will notify you of as soon as dates are confirmed.
- ★ **Vacation Bible School** will take place, but dates have not yet been confirmed. We have had two parents offer to co-chair VBS and have had many more offer their support to help.

Among Our Own

New Member Sunday
Join us April 3rd to welcome our newest UCC members.

In Memoriam
UCC member **Wayne Hooper** passed away on March 18. Our deepest condolences go to his wife, UCC member Marian Chambers and their family.

Spirit Quest

**Religion and Life:
The Spiritual Landscape of
America's Nature Writers**

*Wednesday Evenings at 6:00.
Childcare available.*

April 6: Wendell Berry's Given and his essay, "Christianity and the Survival of Creation"

May 4: Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek and Holy the Firm