October Packet

For Mike Denton’s blog, please click here.

Reflection on UCC Lectionary Text

Check out the online worship services available in our conference.

Conference Calendar

If you’d like your committee meeting or event added to the calendar, please send an email to pncucc@gmail.com.

Please see website for links to Conference check-in meetings: https://bit.ly/3aA3MJH

October

1. Courtney's Office Hour online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482248287; 2:00-3:00pm
2. Moderators Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1481017260; 7:00-8:30pm
3. Admin and Financial Check-in; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1497218618; 1:00-2:00pm
   (also on 10/9; 10/16; 10/23; 10/30)
4. Fun Friday Pastors Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1484579147; 4:00-5:00pm
   (also on 10/9; 10/16; 10/23; 10/30)
5. Ordination of Trina Banks; online with Liberation UCC; 1:00 (must pre-register)
6. Our Faith Our Vote online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
   (also on 10/14; 10/21; 10/28)
7. Pastoral Care Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480946522; 1:30-2:30pm
8. Courtney's Office Hour online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482248287; 2:00-3:00pm
9. Stewardship Leadership Team; 11:00-12:00 noon
10. Westside Committee on Ministry meeting; online; 9:30am-2:00pm
11. Moderators Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
12. Communication Team; online; 3:00-4:00pm
13. Worship Resources Check-in; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480494548; 1:30-2:30pm
14. Church Development Committee; online; 2:00-3:00pm
15. Courtney's Office Hour online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482248287; 2:00-3:00pm
16. Stewardship/Finance; online; 9:00-10:00am
17. Stewardship/Interpretation; online; 10:00-11:30am
18. Moderators Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480946522; 1:30-2:30pm
19. Ordination of Sophie Morse TBA
20. Our Faith Our Vote online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1493075942; 1:30-2:30pm
21. Eastside Committee on Ministry online; 10:00am-2:00pm
22. N-Sid-Sen Advisory Meeting; online; 9:00-10:30
23. Environmental Justice meeting; online; 4:30-5:30pm
24. Board of Directors meeting; online; 6:00-7:30pm
25. Pastoral Care Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480946522; 1:30-2:30pm
26. Courtney's Office Hour online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482248287; 2:00-
November
2  Our Faith Our Vote online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1493075942; 1:30-2:30pm
3  Election Day - VOTE!
4  Courtney's Office Hour; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1490066906; 9:30-10:30am
4  Pastoral Care Check-in online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480946522; 1:30-2:30pm
5  Courtney's Office Hour online; https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482248287; 2:00-3:00pm
8  Ordination of Sophie Morse

Stewardship Column
Church during a Pandemic: What Started as Virtual I Now Recognize as Vital
October 2020

Back in March when we first shut down in-person worship and other gatherings of our congregations I looked at the quick pivot we had to make as a transition to Virtual Church. At University UCC in Seattle the first week or two of taking Sunday morning on-line consisted of a small cadre of worship leaders and a few videographer / techies coming together in our empty sanctuary to put out a real-time service for our congregants to watch from their places of shelter. We were trying to give everyone an experience that was as close as we could get to the feel of being physically together in our church building. What resulted was not bad, but many of us felt that it seemed to focus on trying to re-create what was not possible given the constraints of the pandemic we faced. Showing the chancel without our choir and seeing views from our balcony showing the empty pews were all too real reminders of what all of us were missing.

In those early days of physical separation, the news media spoke of the wide range of community activities and gatherings that were being cancelled due to COVID-19. These included many references to churches having had to “close”. I have a strong memory from our UCUC Church Council meeting in the middle of March (the first one conducted via Zoom) of a wise statement shared by our clergy making clear that, “We are not closed and never have been nor will be closed!” That reassurance was an important launching point for me in moving forward on this uncertain path with conviction and purpose. It was a call to the old rallying cry of: “When the going gets tough, the tough get going!” What has evolved since those uncertain March days has been a re-envisioning of what church looks like and what role it needs to play in the lives of our congregants and the wider world. The UCUC on-line services that go live on YouTube and Facebook each Sunday at 10am have embraced the opportunity to take church well beyond the walls of
our sanctuary. We have material created out in nature, in people’s homes, and through the skills of technicians who coordinate music and dance with many participants offering their parts from different spaces and times. Our weekly services have taken on a sense of energy and vitality that may be difficult to match when we are finally able to gather safely in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings!

Another aspect of church that has become important as the period of the physical separation drags on is adjusting the types and levels of support that we provide for each other. Some of our congregants who were able to live independently before COVID-19 now find themselves needing help with daily tasks. Many have needed help navigating the technology challenges of being as connected as possible. All of us need the support of community to weather the stress of the changes that have come our way via the limitations and constraints imposed by this pandemic.

For me, the single most important organization for facing these challenging times is church. It is through church that I am both fed the living waters that I need and find opportunity to be a conduit for sharing those waters with other. God is definitely still speaking, yelling in fact, and it is heartening to see so many within UCC listening, embracing, and acting to Do Justice, Love Kindness, and Walk Humbly with God and all God’s people.

In these rapidly evolving times I challenge each of us to revisit the ways that we are stewards of God’s world and God’s people. It is likely that the needs of the communities where you find yourself are different from what they were a year ago. Similarly, the changes in your own life may mean your abilities to contribute both time and finances have changed. Be grace-filled as you discern how and how much you can offer. Listen for God’s call for action that comes to each of us through so many different channels. Seek advice from those in the church that you know and trust. Please join me in continuing the vitality of the UCC at the local, conference, and national levels. We need God and God needs us now more than ever. Be the Vital Church!

Ed Coleman, University UCC (Seattle) Assistant Moderator
Ordination

Trina L Banks will be ordained on October 3, 2020 at an online service beginning at 1:00pm. She is a member of United Christian Church Renton. She will serve as a Clinical Chaplain at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. Please register in advance to attend. (Link no longer valid to invitation.)

Short Bio: Trina L Banks, MDiv

Trina and her wife Adrienne Banks are members of United Christian Church Renton, in Renton, WA. Trina’s entry into the work of chaplaincy began, informally, as a child in New Orleans, LA, where her younger brother and a host of relatives still live. In 1990, in the greater Seattle area, she began working primarily with African Americans affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Her work has expanded over these 30 years to include her work helping to found Sojourner Truth Ministries Church, to serving on the ministerial team at Liberation UCC, and finally to serving in her role as a Clinical Chaplain at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. In 2017 she received her Master of Divinity from Seattle University, School of Theology and Ministry. She completed her Clinical Pastoral Education Residency as a Hospice Chaplain with CHI Franciscan Hospice and Palliative Care. Her ordination to Specialized Ministry is scheduled for October 3, 2020.
Make Your Voice Count

I've long thought that voting was easy but this year it may not be. I've been hearing that I need a voting plan and help others map out theirs, and to consider having a Plan B. Democracy is not automatic; we have to work at it. Please start now to decide how you’re going to vote. Make sure you will get your ballot, secure your ballot, and return your ballot. If you are voting in person, it’s not too early to learn the hours of your polling place.

Get in conversations; don’t be afraid to share why voting is important to you and ask people you know to make their own voting plan. You don’t have to be an expert. Conversations about voting are not about candidates, so don’t focus on the candidate or issue—focus on voting. A simple way to start a conversation is to say “I hope you are going to vote and have a plan for that.” If you know a first-time voter, reach out to them to see if they have questions about voting if they are away at school. If they have questions, even if you don’t know the exact answer, it’s vital that you are able to point them in the right direction. If someone you know is not registered, please ask them to go to the website vote.org. There you can register to vote, check your polling places, or request an absentee ballot (if offered) if you do not want to vote in person due to safety issues.

Value-based voices are important in the upcoming election. The UCC has long seen voting rights as a civil rights issue. In 2004, the UCC launched the “Our Faith Our Vote” campaign to enable folks to become involved in a non-partisan way.

Our Faith Our Vote: https://www.ucc.org/ourfaithourvote

The United Church of Christ D.C. Office has posted specific one-page resources on what UCC has said about certain issues. There are also recorded webinars available for viewing. They add new resources frequently so check back often!

Election Protection Hotline. Call if you witness issues at your voting place you may call 800-our-vote. Check out their website: https://866ourvote.org/state/

This is also a good time to think about what will happen if we have a contested election. It is highly likely we will not know the outcome on election night. Plus, there are still important things to do after the election. Please sign up for UCC Justice and Peace Action Network. Regardless of the outcome of the election, we need to be prepared in January to push forward the things we want to accomplish.

The 2020 election will be a critical one for ensuring that voters stay safe while exercising their right to vote. More tips on how to reach out to people in your extended network: https://domesticemployers.org/vote/
A final note:

Ballots will be sent out in Washington State on October 16th. On that Sunday, consider preaching or speaking about voting as an action of stewardship. On that same Sunday and/or the following, invite people to pray about how they vote and for the voting process (some examples of non-partisan prayers will be coming).

If you’d like to learn more and participate, the PNC’s Our Faith Our Vote group is meeting every Monday at 1:30:
Click on: https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1493075942
Or call: (623)4049000 using meeting ID: 149 307 5942

UCNews Edition

The Fall 2020 issue of the UCNews is now online at https://www.pncuccnews.org with news about:

- Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen
- Moderators Meetings
- Homelessness and churches
- Walla Walla church’s anti-racism statement and action
- Moderator's report on Board actions
- and other thought-provoking columns.

Please share with your congregations and friends.
Investments

Matthew Wagner, the Vice President of Institutional Relationships of the United Church Funds has written a Fiduciary Focus on investment policy for churches and other faith-based organizations. He provides us with six questions as a way to start writing our own policy. For more information please contact Matthew Wagner at info@ucfunds.org.

As I often find myself these days, I was recently on a Zoom call with an Investment Committee (which shall remain nameless to protect the innocent), discussing a proposed Investment Policy Statement. The group in charge of putting together the initial draft didn’t deviate much from a template, probably found online with a few customizations thrown in here and there. Although the template itself was fairly standard, churches and non-profit organizations are often not.

An investment policy for churches or other faith-based organizations should be viewed not as a policy to be blindly followed, but more of a guide supplying responses to core questions and serving as a living covenant tying the church’s financial and/or investment objectives to your mission and ministry. You shouldn’t have to be an investment professional to be able to understand what’s in the policy or to serve as a fiduciary leader of your church. In fact, many of the most effective Investment Committees I work with have members with limited financial backgrounds. However, these members bring their various experiences to the table and share a common fidelity to the organization and their status as fiduciaries. (Key Note: A “fiduciary” is someone who stands in a close and covenantal position to financial and/or investment assets of an institution, and is required by law to solely serve the best interests of the institution. This obligation is often referred to as the “duty of loyalty and care.”)

To start the process of building a workable and effective investment policy, think about the following six questions as starting points on the journey:

1. **What is your organization and what does it stand for?**
   - Often takes the form of describing a legal name for the entity and listing a mission and/or values statement.

2. **Who are those within and outside the organization that are bound by a fiduciary responsibility to it, and what are their specific roles and duties?**
   - Investment Committee Members
   - Investment Advisors (Managers)
   - Outside Consultants
   - Broker/Dealers and/or Custodians
3. Which recognized laws and/or organizational by-laws or constitutions are providing guidelines to the organization and its fiduciaries?

- For all states except Pennsylvania, there is a Uniform Standard Law for fiduciaries of non-profit asset management: UPMIFA.

- If the constitution or by-laws of the organization specifically denote the descriptions and responsibilities of the Investment Committee, they should be listed here.

4. How will the organization define its financial goals and its core values as part of creating a suitable investment portfolio?

- Responsible investing parameters should be consistent with professional portfolio management best practices (diversification, asset allocation, etc.) and the financial requirements of the organization.

- Work with a reputable and experienced investment advisor to build an asset allocation strategy and portfolio that values your organization’s mission goals and funding requirements.

5. Through what processes will the organization distribute funds from the portfolio to supply dollars for mission and ministry, and when will those distributions be most effective to the organization and least detrimental to the portfolio’s long-term purchasing power?

- Churches are encouraged to use a responsible percentage of a rolling quarterly balance to take distributions. For example: an annual distribution of 4% (taken quarterly) based on the rolling average of the previous 12-quarter account balances.

6. What happens if our investment policy, the fiduciaries or the needs of the organization change?

- This includes the parameters by which a fiduciary can be hired or fired, the process for taking an additional draw or excessive distribution, or governance approval for changes to the investment policy.

Many organizations include a seventh question regarding gift acceptance, or they will create a separate gift acceptance policy.

From the six core questions, an organization’s leaders should be able to build a solid investment policy statement that can stand the test of time. Clearly there will be times to make adjustments to the policy as goals, requirements and vision of the organization change, but I generally encourage Committees to adopt policies that have a bit of
flexibility to avoid regular changes and allow the fiduciaries to do their jobs. To summarize, ask yourself these questions:

- Does my church or organization have an up-to-date investment policy that answers the six core questions listed above?
- When was the last time a professional reviewed our policy? (Hint: You should have your investment policy reviewed every two years.)
- Has my church or organization ever conducted a full fiduciary review?
- Who is qualified to do a formal investment policy or fiduciary review, and where do I find them?

The answer to the fourth bullet is a complicated one in that there is little training available to volunteers who serve as fiduciaries, and unfortunately the same is true for investment professionals who typically lack expertise and experience in dealing with the unique needs of churches and non-profit organizations. An organization called Fi360 is the leading voice in the investment industry on best practices for fiduciaries, and they have created a set of standards for fiduciaries to follow and a plan of action for comprehensive fiduciary reviews. Fi360’s gold standard designation is that of the Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst (AIFA) – an accreditation for which investment professionals go through a rigorous training to achieve.

In order to best serve our clients, United Church Funds (UCF) has an AIFA on staff to assist our clients – the author of this article. Our team is available to our clients to help you ensure that you are using effective and efficient strategies to help you meet your fiduciary obligations and ultimately grow your assets responsibly and prudently over time to fund the mission and ministry important to your church.

If you would like to discuss a review of your church or organization’s investment policy or the process of a full fiduciary review, please reach out to Matthew Wagner, Vice President of Institutional Relationships. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to serve your church!
October Celebrations

Here are significant dates for our clergy and their partners. Best wishes to you on these special days.

Ordinations

1  David Kratz  48 years  15  Peter Ilgenfritz  33 years
2  Ann Eidson  15 years  15  Chris Morton  48 years
2  Kizzie E. Jones  26 years  16  David Brown  65 years
3  Roberta Rominger  38 years  17  Mary Olney-Loyd  38 years
4  Beth Plumbo  28 years  17  Susan Welsh  38 years
5  Kelsey Beebe  2 years  19  Judi Edwards  27 years
5  Beverly Jenden-Riedlinger  17 years  23  Stephen Eriksen  34 years
5  Meighan Pritchard  6 years  25  Bianca Davis-Lovelace  5 years
6  Cecilia McKeen  18 years  26  Lauren Cannon  6 years
7  Rick Russell  36 years  26  Joy Haertig  34 years
14  Kevin Bechtold  2 years  26  Sandra Rosen  37 years
15  Robert Anderson  59 years  29  Anthony Robinson  43 years

Birthdays

1  Patricia Eisenhauer  31  Sandy Wisecarver
1  Linda Robinson
3  Emily Tanis-Likkel
4  Lynnea Mayer
4  Martha Teigen
5  Ryan Lambert
6  Art Mampel
7  Richard Gamble
7  Susan Yarrow Morris
7  Chris Morton
7  Jane Sorenson
9  Judith Bardsley
9  Lloyd Van Vactor
12  Ed Crouch
12  Paul Forman
16  Mark Bonnema
18  Tammy Stampfli
22  Nell Carlson
25  Jackie Mampel
28  Alice M. C. Ling
29  Bob Ingalls
30  Donivan Johnson
Anniversaries

5  Beverly Jenden-Riedlinger & Thomas Riedlinger
6  Marj Johnston & Cindi Abbott
10 Kathleen Morgan & Ann Lev
11 Mark Travis & Michael Tomberg
16 Michael Denton & Lauren Cannon
18 Dan Stern & Sam Wilson