**IN THE INTERIM by Laura Crow**

This past week, I spent three days in Milwaukee for General Synod 32. General Synod is the biennial gathering of the United Church of Christ and this year it took place practically in our back yard! I spied several other ORUCC folks there too—Peter Fabian & Ree Hale, Dave & Ann Moyer, Ruth Ann Berkoltz, and I took part in a variety of volunteer tasks. Kerri Parker was present representing the WI Council of Churches. And on Sunday, Ruthanne Landsness and Chris Thomas were able to ride the bus to Synod for worship and the outdoor festival. Each of us has stories and experiences to share, and I invite you to ask questions of any of us.

It was my first Synod. I had learned about General Synod in the summer of 2017 when I was taking a class on the History & Polity of the UCC. Our class met just a couple weeks before the delegates gathered in Baltimore. I recall reading a wide variety of resolutions that were going to be discussed and wondered about the people and the process behind such an undertaking. So I came to the first three days in Milwaukee with high expectations.

I will say at the outset that I wish I had committed to the whole week—in part because the really meaty debates on resolutions came later in the week, and also because I experienced Synod more as a “volunteer” than as a “participant.” Some of the things I wanted to do—attend workshops on Leadership Formation and Clinical Pastoral Education—overlapped with some of my volunteer shifts. Even worship felt a little jumbled for me because I was concerned about my usher duties, not completely able to settle in with the Spirit. Though I found the experience a bit too much like a “performance” at times, the preaching was absolutely inspiring and energizing, leaving me with renewed passion for being “salt and light,” sharing God’s love and blessing with our communities and world.

Like any conference of this size and complexity, there were things I treasured and others that gave me pause. Among my treasures were keynoter Matthew Desmond (author of “Evicted”), and the Member-In-Discernment breakfast where I met 80 or so other MIDs (people in the process of discerning a call toward ordination). I was pleasantly surprised to note that there were many other “second career” and “alternative path” folks like me present. It was a pleasure to connect with others sharing the same journey and to learn about a wide variety of people and practical UCC resources. One resource in particular is an initiative on erasing the stigma of mental health issues and combating ableism or all kinds.

Among my challenges was the group “Faithful and Welcoming” churches. The call themselves ECOTs—evangelical, conservative, orthodox, or traditional. If ORUCC is on the far liberal side of a denomination known for its progressive stands, these churches hold down the other end of the spectrum. I give them credit for staying in a denomination that publicly leans far from their understanding of scriptural authority and tradition. But, I struggled to know how to be accepting of people who are openly hostile to people and justice issues I care deeply about. There was discussion whether a group like “F&W” should even be allowed a place in the Exhibit Hall. I don’t know if that resolution ever made it out of committee.

General Synod was a great reminder of the wide diversity within our shared denomination. It is so easy to get caught up in my own echo chamber so I found it life giving to be among people of different backgrounds and perspectives and to be reminded that there is no one way to do anything in the church. This week General Synod delegates passed resolutions on the Green New Deal, recognizing opioid addition as a “health epidemic”, and marched en masse in support of refugees. The witness of the church—any church—is imperfect, but God’s light still shines!
Prayers of JOY

For our summer preaching series: Our Language of Faith – Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones?

For our teens and their adult chaperones on a mission trip in Alamosa, Colorado

For our Pastoral Search Committee and the good work they are doing

For the team interviewing candidates for our new Communications Director

For the Java & Jesus Mission Team which is creating a year-long schedule of facilitators and topics for J&J (Helene Nelson, Barb Hummel, Dan Rossmiller)

For our garden tenders who are working very hard to keep our grounds looking beautiful

For the General Synod of the UCC which was held in Milwaukee last weekend

For Deb Heilert who, despite her health issues, was able to attend worship last Sunday morning

For Liz Feagles who is feeling much stronger after four leg surgeries in the last few years

For Mary Bucknell’s mother who is celebrating her 90th birthday this week

For the love and blessing our pets bring to our lives

For the respite that comes with vacation days

Prayers of CONCERN

For Sara Hagen whose grandmother Arleen passed away last Sunday in Nebraska

For Sara Hagen and her father Dale who moved Sara’s mother Susan into a memory care facility earlier this week

For Bruce Gladstone’s husband Brian Wilkes recovering from open heart surgery at UW Hospital

For Char Klossner who is undergoing tests for a low platelet count and pain in the kidney area

For Jeanne Garnett who is at Meriter Hospital due to fluid retention in the chest and legs

For Lauren Amburn recovering at home from surgery to remove a kidney

For Francesca Jeffries’ father Tom who had reconstructive shoulder surgery earlier this week

For Betsy Rota’s family, grieving her death on June 7 at the age of 75

For families separated at our nation’s borders and all seeking asylum

For families that struggle with homelessness and poverty

For all who are impacted by violence, war, injustice, bigotry, and hatred

For our planet and its changing climate producing storms of greater intensity and frequency

July Compassion Offering:

Habitat for Humanity

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates safe, decent, affordable homes with the help of our partner families. Habitat homes are sold to partner families at no profit. Homes are affordable for partner families with a low interest loan. Homeowners pay monthly mortgage payments to Habitat and then those payments are used to build more Habitat houses.

In addition to a down payment and the monthly mortgage payments, families invest their own labor — sweat equity — into building their Habitat house. Families are required to put in between in 325 and 375 sweat equity hours. Each family must also attend educational courses on how to maintain a home, landscaping, budgeting, how to be a good neighbor and insurance.

The combination of holding down construction expense with volunteer labor and low interest on a mortgage is what makes a Habitat home affordable. Including property taxes and insurance, the Habitat homeowner’s monthly mortgage payment is no more than 28-30 percent of their gross income.

Habitat for Humanity of Dane County also provides a home repair program to help homeowners struggling to maintain their home. Habitat Home Repair repairs homes in partnership with qualified, low-income homeowners, and a low-interest loan is provided to qualified families to cover the cost of larger repair projects.

For credit on your church statement, please write “Habitat” or “Compassion Offering” in the memo line of your check. While this will not count toward your annual pledge, we will acknowledge the contribution on your giving statement.

THANK YOU for your generosity!

Greeting Cards

Are you dreaming of Daffodils and tulips? A spring selection of Secrets From the Garden photo greeting cards will be back in the Crossroads starting Sunday, March 10. The whole cost of the cards goes to eviction prevention for needy neighbors.

- A woman who provides day care as her means of income lost two families and fell behind on her rent.
- A woman working at Penny’s had her hours cut to one day a week and fell behind on her rent.
- A homeless woman with two children living in a car got a job and a landlord offered her an apartment. We helped her with the deposit.

Cards are $4 each or 6 for $20. Checks can be made out to ORUCC with “cards” in the memo line, or you can place cash in envelope in card basket.

THANK YOU for your support!
**Women’s Book Group**  
**July 11:**
On Thursday, July 11, from 1:30-3:00 in the church’s Alfred Swan Room, we will discuss *The Soul of America* by Jon Meacham. From the book jacket: “Our current climate of partisan fury is not new, and in [this book] Meacham shows us how what Abraham Lincoln called ‘the better angels of our nature’ have repeatedly won the day.” Ken Burns calls this book “…a beautifully expressed and convincing prayer...to meet the obvious challenges of today.”

If you are a woman who enjoys discussing books you have read, please join us. Let Jan Christian know if you plan to attend (ljchrist@wisc.edu or 827-0500).

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**Weekly Meditation Group:**

**Thursday mornings,** from 8:30 to 9:30 am, for a shared time of silent meditation and reflections on our spiritual journeys. Contact Dave Myers at 274-0381 or 47_5698@msn.com or Helene Nelson 259-2546 or helenemargret@gmail.com for more information.

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**Wayfinding Fall Retreat—“The Practice of Finding”:**

The Wayfinding program for ORUCC “seniors” will resume this fall with a retreat at Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton.

**Wednesday, Oct. 23**  
9:30am—3:00pm (includes lunch)

Rev. Holly Whitcomb will lead a retreat called “The Practice of Finding: How Gratitude Leads the Way to Enough” on the beautiful facilities and grounds at Holy Wisdom Monastery. At this retreat, Rev. Whitcomb will introduce us to the spiritual practice of finding—an antidote to chronic seeking, while never attaining “enough.”

Retreat themes include: Choosing to Dwell in the Present, Glimpsing the Holy in Unexpected Places, and Rediscovering Your Gifts & Purpose.

The cost is $40 per person. **To register email the church office at orucc.org and make your checks out to ORUCC with “Wayfinding Retreat” in the memo line.**

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**New Shawls to be Dedicated in September!**

Our supplies of prayer shawls are getting low and we would love to dedicate a new batch of shawls in September! Our church has gifted many shawls to members this spring and, in response to a request from the UCC General Synod, Ree Hale gifted four prayer shawls which were used in their Comfort Room.

This note is to encourage your creative spirits—as if you needed an excuse to visit the yarn store!—during these summer months so we at ORUCC will be prepared for Fall.

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**Garden Tenders:**

Do you have an hour or two? Joyce Pohl is looking for volunteers willing to weed and water the various gardens this summer. They are in great shape now and just need some TLC to keep them looking fabulous! We get lots of compliments from people in the neighborhood and we want to continue to wow them. We can plan an evening weeding party or you can stop by on weekday mornings. Contact Joyce Pohl (206-5697) or the church office if you want more information.

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**Men’s Group July 8 & 22:**

The ORUCC Men’s Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays, from 7:15pm-8:45pm in the Romero Room. Contact John Lemke at jlemke1@charter.net or 829-3692 if you are interested in joining this group.

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**Women’s (and Men’s!) Breakfast July 5:**

We meet at the Pancake Café at 728 S. Gammon Rd. (near Watts Rd) at 8:30 on the first Friday of the month. This is an informal gathering to chat on many subjects and interests. Join Jeanne Garnett and others for a delicious breakfast and great conversation. **THERE IS ALSO A TABLE FOR MEN, so know ALL are invited to enjoy a time of food and fellowship!**
Java and Jesus

Java & Jesus is a 45-50 minute facilitated discussion held on most Sundays at 9:00am, and is open to everyone! Topics vary, but typically center on faith and progressive Christian values.

On July 7 and August 4, you will have the opportunity to “talk back” about our sermon series Our Vocabulary of Faith: Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones? during the Java & Jesus hour. If you have questions or comments to begin these discussions, please send them to Laura Crow (pastorlaura@orucc.org).

Stay up to date! Pastor Ken sends out reminders and links to short readings for the upcoming week. If you wish to be added to that Java & Jesus email list, please contact Ken (ken@orucc.org). For the summer, J&J has been meeting in the Alfred Swan room.

Questions or suggestions? Please contact a member of the Java & Jesus Mission Team: Dan Rossmiller, Helene Nelson, and Barb Hummel.

Pastoral Search Committee July Update

The Search Committee completed two in-person interviews the week of June 17 as well as two Skype interviews. We anticipate one more in-person interview near the end of July. In addition, we are reviewing a few new applications we have received. During the month of July, various committee members will be away for different periods of time and we will re-convene at the end of July. We welcome and appreciate your prayers for the Spirit’s guidance in our discernment. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask Sara Roberts, Mary Bucknell, Dana Dobbins, Barbara Stretchberry, Doug Piper, Kim Kasper, Brian Lancer and Chris Thomas.

Summer Preaching Themes at ORUCC:

We asked – you answered! Below is the list of preaching themes for this summer, a series we are calling Our Vocabulary of Faith: Stumbling Blocks or Stepping Stones? You won’t want to miss it!

- July 7 – Grace & Judgment: “There but by the grace of God, go I” (Laura Crow)
- July 14 – OT God vs NT God (Tammy Martens)
- July 21 – The Bible & Women (Laura Crow)
- July 28 – Heaven & Hell: Fire, the biblical cleanser (Laura Crow)
- August 4 – The Bible & Science (Laura Crow)
- August 11 – Faith, Love, & the Church (Tammy Martens, also Polka Sunday)
- August 18 – Original Sin: Come on ... really! What about infants? (Ken Pennings)
- August 25 – The Bible & Violence: “God told me to...” (Laura Crow)

Green(land) Quiz:

If all the ice tied up in Greenland’s glaciers melts how much would the world’s oceans rise? Show your work and put your answer in the GREEN JAR in Friendship Hall.

For your calculations:
1. Greenland’s area is 840,000 square miles. 84.2% is glaciated. Also assume the glacier is 2 miles thick at its peak with an average thickness of 1 mile.
2. The formula for the surface area of a sphere is \( A = \pi d^2 \). Earth’s diameter is 7,900 miles, and the oceans cover 71% of earth’s surface.
3. One mile equals 5,280 feet.

Good luck! Correct answers will receive recognition.

From Gene Dyar & The Care of Creation Committee.

Summer Discussion on the Gospel of John

You are invited to join a one-hour discussion on the Gospel of John, every Wednesday in June, July and August, facilitated primarily by Ken Pennings, and occasionally by Laura Crow. Discussions will take place on Wednesdays, 12 noon—1 pm, at the church.

If you would like to attend, please contact Ken Pennings to have your email address added to the list serve (ken@orucc.org). In preparation for our first discussion, please read quickly through the whole Gospel of John in whatever version of the Bible you like.

Reading & Facilitator Schedule:
- July 3—no discussion
- July 10—John 4-5 (Laura Crow)
- July 17—John 6-7 (Ken Pennings)
- July 24—John 8-10 (Laura)
- August 7—John 13-14 (Ken)
- August 14—John 15-16 (Ken)
- August 21—John 17-19 (Ken)
- August 28—John 20-21 (Ken)
**Might You Serve as a Pen Pal?**

A gentleman named Dedric Moore, who is currently incarcerated in Illinois, has requested a pen pal with whom he can correspond and make a spiritual connection. Upon his release, he plans to return to Madison and visit our church. If interested, contact Ken Pennings at ken@orucc.org.

**Early Childhood Music and Movement with Julie Mazer:**

- **8-week session, June 19-Aug 14**
  - (No class July 3), 9:30-10:15
  - Fee $73/child

Children ages 6 months-5 years plus a caregiver are invited to sing, dance, and play in the Crossroads. For more info: e-mail Julie at info@julieamazer.com.

**Volunteers**

**Financial Secretary**

- July 7   Hope Soroos
- July 14  Peter Hoff
- July 21  Meg Stevens
- July 28  Hope Soroos

**Ushers**

- July 7   Sandra Dyer
  - Joyce Binder
  - Dorothy Peterson
- July 14  Judy Winkel
  - Phil Winkel
  - Jon Blanchard
- July 21  Larry Goss
  - Sandra Dyar
  - Jarrett Gersten
- July 28  Rick Daluge
  - Carolyn Carlson
  - James Treichel

**Welcomers**

- July 7   Joyce Dingman
  - Mary Loving
  - Hope Soroos
- July 14  Kurt Jaehnig
  - Charlene Gallagher
  - Ruthanne Landsness
- July 21  Robert Prugh
  - Carol Prugh
  - Kurt Jaehnig
- July 28  Dianne & Heather Stevens
  - Carol & Dick Karls

**Sunday Coffee**

- July 7   Barb & Greg Louden
- July 14  Jerry Hagen
- July 21  Chris Thomas
- July 28  Rachael & Brian Lancer

**Liturgists**

- July 7   Ken Psyck
- July 14  Leah Narans
- July 21  Jill Westberg
- July 28  Jeanne Moberly

Liturgists read the opening Call to Worship and/or the Scripture for the day. People of ALL AGES and abilities are welcome. We have spots OPEN beginning in August, so please check available dates and join this important ministry!

**Life Line Screening—July 2:**

Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, is pleased to offer a preventive health event at Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ on 7/2/2019.

Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries, abdominal aortic aneurysms, hardening of the arteries in the legs, atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat, and a bone density screening, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis.

Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from $149 ($139 with coupon).

All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. **See fliers in the Crossroads for information on registration and to receive the $10 coupon.**

**Drive Immigrants to Court Training:**

On Sunday, July 7, at 11:15 am, First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison, will host a training for **volunteers who want to assist local immigrants by driving them to Immigration Court in Chicago or to ICE appointments in Milwaukee.** This Dane Sanctuary Coalition project has already provided many rides to individuals and families. Immigrants with or without papers must make their appointments, so this is a very important service we can provide.

Please contact Dorit Bergen, (elanor3560@att.net) if you want to attend the training.

**Coffee Fund**

Many of us enjoy a good cup of Fair Trade coffee after worship on Sunday mornings. **ALL donations to the coffee fund are greatly appreciated!**

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**Use Sign Up Genius for these and other great opportunities! Contact Ken Pennings, Tammy Martens, or Laura Crow with any questions.**

https://www.orucc.org/volunteer/
Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ
1501 Gilbert Road
Madison, WI 53711
Phone: 608-271-7212
Fax: 608-271-7265

OUR CHURCH IS OPEN AND AFFIRMING OF ALL PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE, CULTURE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER EXPRESSION OR IDENTITY, AND ECONOMIC STATUS.
OUR CHURCH IS A SAFE SANCTUARY FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
www.orucc.org

Get Connected!
Be the first to get updates and reminders of events happening at ORUCC!

EMAIL: To be added to or removed from any of these email lists, please contact office@orucc.org.
Weekly E-post shares the events of the upcoming week
Monthly E-prayer reminds us of prayers within the congregation

FACEBOOK:
Follow the church on Facebook at “Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ.” We also have a NEW private FB Group “Members & Friends of ORUCC”! This is a great way to share prayer concerns & updates, events, photos, and announcements with our church family

Also check out the NEW “Madison Labyrinth Walks” FB group for announcements of labyrinth walks at ORUCC & throughout the Madison area.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—July 2019

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Knitting Group</td>
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<td>July 4</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Meditation Group-INDEPENDENCE DAY</td>
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<td>July 5</td>
<td>8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Women’s Breakfast</td>
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<td>July 7</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Java &amp; Jesus</td>
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<td>Sunday Worship</td>
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<td>July 8</td>
<td>7:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Men’s Group</td>
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<td>July 9</td>
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<td>Friendship Circle</td>
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<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Care of Creation Meeting</td>
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<td>July 10</td>
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<td>5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Resources Meeting</td>
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<td>July 11</td>
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<td>Women’s Book Group</td>
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<td>July 14</td>
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<td>Java &amp; Jesus</td>
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<td>Sunday Worship</td>
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<td>July 15</td>
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<td>Leadership Team</td>
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<td>July 16</td>
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<td>Bible Study</td>
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<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Christian Witness &amp; Service</td>
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<td>July 18</td>
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<td>July 19</td>
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<td>Men’s Group</td>
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<td>July 20</td>
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<td>Sanctuary Mission Meeting</td>
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<td>Java &amp; Jesus</td>
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<td>Sunday Worship</td>
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<td>July 27</td>
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<td>Bible Study</td>
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August 11—POLKA SUNDAY! Invite your friends!
August 28—Mid-Year Leadership & Ministry Chair Meeting (5:30pm-8:00pm)

Make CAMP a part of your summer
Scholarship money is available
Register at www.ucci.org

July Open Office Hours
Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Friday: CLOSED
CLOSED Thursday, July 4

You may find people in the building outside these hours, but if you need to see someone, please call ahead and make an appointment. Thank you!