

Job 38:12-21
2 Timothy 1:12b-14
Psalm 8

Creation story from Job
The treasure of the true God
How exalted is your name

The Guild House roots were set in 1893, when the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) established the Ann Arbor Bible Chair at the University of Michigan, as an independent institution. In 1934 this was reconstituted into a true campus ministry nurturing intellectual, spiritual and ethical development as well as action for social justice, at the "front" of emerging issues on campus. Guild House (at 802 Monroe St.) has continued the social engagement and spiritual nurturing, with a commitment to diversity and interfaith work. It also offers space and support to student-led groups with those agendas. Its ministers have all been Disciples of Christ or UCC clergy; its last three ministers have been members of Church of the Good Shepherd in Ann Arbor, MI. Current programming includes Interfaith and Interracial Dialogue series, Alternative Spring Break trips, counseling, sacraments, mentoring and advocacy, workshops and presentations, Sexuality and Spirituality series, and more. Guild House depends primarily on contributions from individuals.

P R A Y E R :

God, whose fingers sculpt sun and moon and curl the baby's ear; Spirit, brooding over chaos before the naming of day; Savior, sending us to earth's ends with water and words; startle us with the grace, love and communion of your unity in diversity, that we may live to the praise of your majestic name. Amen.

Job 38:22-38
John 14:15-17
Psalm 8

Creation story from Job
Father, Son, Spirit
How exalted is your name

The Foggy Bottom Food Pantry is a mission of The United Church UCC in NW Washington, DC, established in 1981 as a community service. Money and food from the church, individual members, FEMA, student groups of the George Washington University, and others provide the basic support. Funds are used to purchase food and supplies, principally salvage food from the Capital Area Community Food Bank. There are no overhead charges because the program is run by volunteers utilizing the church's facilities. Food is bagged and distributed twice per month to individuals and families that can demonstrate need. Special bags containing ready-to-eat foods are prepared for those who are homeless. The Pantry is currently distributing about 800 bags of food each month (approximately 10,000 pounds) at a cost of about \$1,500 per month.

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Life-giving Spirit

Acts 2:1-21
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
John 20:19-23

Filled with the Spirit
Renewing the face of the earth
Varieties of gifts, the same Spirit
The Spirit poured out

We talk a lot about justice, values and faith. But, do our actions support those words? The Rev. David Bergman-Hill, Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Finance with the Northern California-Nevada Conference, estimates that if you are average in your church donations, about 3 percent of your income is dedicated to the church. That's 60 cents you give to the church from a \$20 ATM withdrawal.

In turn, your church passes on about 2 cents to the Conference and national setting of the UCC. Is 2 cents really the level of contribution that represents your commitment to the work of the church? Disaster Ministries, missionary programs, advocacy and support for people who are homeless, prison ministry, housing, evangelism, programs for seminary students - all the projects supported by One Great Hour of Sharing and Neighbors in Need, Strengthen The Church, and the Christmas Fund - all worthy of a total of 2 cents?

It wouldn't take much to turn things around. If the average donation were increased just one percent, from 3 percent to 4, it would mean an increase in funding of 33 percent for your church's mission and ministry. What a ripple effect! Your congregation would then increase their giving to the Conference and the national setting of the UCC to 4 percent - which could ensure the mission and ministries of our UCC for generations to come. Where to begin? Start with a simple question: "What do the choices I make in spending my money say about my values and faith?" Track your spending. One less video rental a month or gourmet coffee might make the world of difference - literally!

P R A Y E R :

Perplexing, Pentecostal God, you infuse us with your Spirit, urging us to vision and dream. May the gift of your presence find voice in our lives, that our babbling may be transformed into discernment and the flickering of many tongues light an unquenchable fire of compassion and justice. Amen.

May 12

Joel 2:18-29
Romans 8:18-24
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

The promised spirit of God
We have the first fruits of the Spirit
Renewing the face of the earth

A Pentecost moment – when the Spirit is especially present and strong in our heart and mind – is a life-giving, life-changing experience. The Spirit was definitely present when 26 members and friends of the Catoctin Association of the UCC's Central Atlantic Conference joined in rebuilding efforts at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi. Representatives of seven congregations attended to the installation of heating and air conditioning systems, connection of appliances, and laying of floor tiles. Foundations were laid as well – not with brick and mortar, but with stories shared of hope and survival. Foundations of friendship took shape on this trip with promises that the work will not be abandoned and that the Spirit will stay strong and present in Biloxi.

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May 13

Ezekiel 39:7-8, 21-29
Romans 8:26-27
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

The promised spirit of God
Praying in the Spirit
Renewing the face of the earth

God is Still Speaking, and as Silversky and Carlos Madrazo exemplify, God is a God of many languages. Silversky was ordained as a UCC minister in the Philippines and speaks two of the 87 Filipino languages in addition to English. Carlos, who also speaks two Filipino languages and English, taught a year in China and served four years in Indonesia with Global Ministries. As missionaries to Nepal and Bangladesh the couple learned enough Nepali and Bengali to communicate with the people they served. Carlos also knows Indonesian and will learn Portuguese in preparation for his next assignment in East Timor. As Silversky and Carlos say, “language is the key to understanding,” as they act as God's instruments in serving others.

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May 14

Numbers 11:24-30
John 7:37-39
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

The spirit rests on Israel's elders
Jesus, the true living water
Renewing the face of the earth

The First Cong[regational] UCC church in Montclair, NJ had about 35 people worshipping in 2000 at a massive plant facility. The question, ‘Should they close their doors?’ A resounding ‘No’ came through. Keep it going, fan it and it might ignite, the Rev. Howell stated, and it did. The church decided their future was to provide an alternative Christian message, to create a welcoming church for those who might not already have a church. Utilizing resources from the UCC's “God is Still Speaking” campaign, weekly worship grew from 35 people to an average of 80-100 and from just three or four children in the church school to about 20.

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May 15

Job 38:1-11
2 Timothy 1:8-12a
Psalm 8

Creation story from Job
Grace revealed in Christ
How exalted is your name

Katie Wilcox was an American missionary with a vision. She knew that to empower women in India, their interests and talents would have to be cultivated in order for them to become productive, responsible citizens. In 1948, Lady Doak College was created from Katie Wilcox's vision. The ecumenical Christian college offers quality education in science, humanities, languages, business management, and information technology to women of all social strata. The United Church of Christ is one of several groups that provide support for Lady Doak, partly through an endowment with the United Church Foundation. As the Spirit empowered the apostles at Pentecost, Lady Doak College lifts up the spirit of Indian women, develops their leadership qualities and gives power to the powerless.

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