

**May 22, 2009**

On April 27-28, 2008, Colombian Churches and the Peace Commission of the Evangelical Council of Colombia invited the world to join them in Days of Prayer and Action for Peace in Colombia. Ricardo Esquivia, national coordinator of the Peace Commission, in a missive titled "For a Future Full of Hope" specifically called on the United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ – historical champions of peace and justice – to 'clamor, pray and advocate' for those without power. Esquivia recognizes these times of confusion when nations and cultures clash; when oppression and poverty destroy lives and violence is accepted as a cure-all. He prays that the US Congress will not enact free trade agreements which widen the gap between rich and poor and hurt farmers in the US and in Colombia. Esquivia prays that "God's peace always keep you restless, vigilant and on the theological leading edge." Amen.

**Exodus 24:15-18 Moses on Mount Sinai for forty days**  
**Revelation 1:9-18 A vision of the risen Christ**  
**Psalms 47 God has gone up with a shout**

## ***Our Church's Wider Mission: It's Who We Are***

**May 23, 2009**

**Guided by prayer**; the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ is seeking to be faithful to Jesus' call by starting new congregations where people may become disciples. New churches bring vitality and life to us all and provide assurance that future generations will have a strong and vital United Church of Christ. Our goal is "20 by 2020", that is, twenty new churches by the year 2020. The conference is asking each member to give at least five dollars each year to support the ministry of new church start pastors. There are many people who need the United Church of Christ approach to the Gospel. These gifts will insure that there will be strong and vital churches proclaiming, in our distinctive voice, the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**Deuteronomy 34:1-7 Moses goes up to see the promised land**  
**John 16:4-11 Jesus will send the Advocate**  
**Psalms 47 God has gone up with a shout**

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**2009 A Calendar of Prayer for the United Church of Christ**

# **Friends Together**

**May 17, 2009**  
**Sixth Sunday of Easter**



The Still Speaking Cycling Team is a non-competitive group of cyclists who are located all over the United States. On occasion they get together to ride as a team, or you may just spot an individual member riding his or her bike wearing their distinctive jersey.

There are three primary goals of the Still Speaking Cycling Team: networking, evangelism, and fun-in particular order:

Networking - Or more appropriately "making new friends." In the two years the team has been in existence, over 80 jerseys have been purchased by people from Maine to California; and many of the team members have joined others in specific charity rides.

Evangelism - This is not preaching about why we are right and why you are wrong. Meeting other people opens up the possibility to talk about the inclusive grace of God and the basic beliefs of the United Church of Christ. Wearing A Still Speaking Cycling Team jersey affords them the opportunity to share some ideas of the faith with others as they ask questions about the team.

Fun - While their individual definitions of "fun" are as varied as our definitions of "God"; mixing cycling and sharing the good news about the inclusiveness of the United Church of Christ can be fun. Fun is what we all make it.

As more people join the Still Speaking Cycling Team and participate or organize more rides around the country, more friendships will develop and more networking will take place.

**Acts 10: 44-48 The Spirit poured out on the Gentiles**

**Psalms 98 Shout with joy to God**

**1 John 5: 1-6 The victory of faith**

**John 15: 9-17 Christ, the friend and lover**

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**2009 A Calendar of Prayer for the United Church of Christ**

## May 18, 2009

**F**irst Church (Oberlin, OH)/Christian Outreach Food for mind, body and soul are being served by the Christian Outreach Committee of First Church in Oberlin (Ohio) through their efforts with three Global Mission partners – two in Madurai, India and one in Santa Elena, Guatemala. First Church helped establish an annual Lunch Fund for students at American College in Madurai who couldn't afford lunch. The church also gave the founding grant for an endowment at the United Church Foundation so that Lady Doak college, also in Madurai, could continue educating low-income women. An annual gift from the Outreach Committee also supports college operating expenses there. Each year faculty from Lady Doak and American College spend a semester at Oberlin College, which fosters the kind of relationships that keep the partnership vibrant. The third outreach is an endowed Scholarship Fund for village students in Santa Elena, which provides for children's education beyond the sixth grade.

**Deuteronomy 7:1-11 Keeping God's commandments**

**1 Timothy 6:11-12 Pursue righteousness**

**Psalms 93 God reigns above the floods**

### CENTERING PRAYER (May 14—20, 2009)

*Faithful God, make our hearts bold with love for one another. Pour out your Spirit upon all people, that we may live your justice and sing in praise the new song of your marvelous victory. Amen.*

## May 19, 2009

**H**istorically serving immigrating, first and second generation Filipinos, Moanalua Community Church UCC, Honolulu, is in transition. When you believe vital, healthy churches welcome all peoples from all walks of life because God is a God without limit, you use your strategic location, their Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel on Naval property, to welcome a very diverse military population.

Members of Moanalua draw on their rich history of strong extended families, to offer themselves as an extended family to military personnel far from home. Through their Preschool and Day Care Program and partnership with a predominantly Caucasian, military congregation, they live their vision with help from a Strengthen the Church Revitalizing Church grant.

**Deuteronomy 11:1-17 The rewards of obedience**

**1 Timothy 6:13-16 Keep the commandments until Christ comes**

**Psalms 93 God reigns above the floods**

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**2009 A Calendar of Prayer for the United Church of Christ**

## May 20, 2009

**T**raveling by trains, planes, buses and vans a group of 13 volunteers visited a wide selection of Global Mission sites in southern India in November and December 2007, accompanied by the Rev. John Buttrick, the Illinois Conference's Western Association Minister and the Rev. Faye D.B. Buttrick, Illinois Conference representative to the Wider Church Ministries Board. The UCC's Wider Church Ministries sponsored the 2 week-long trip led by the Rev. James Vijayakumar, Area Executive for Southern Asia and Linda Lawrence, Child Sponsorship Administrator. The group visited a rehabilitation site for lepers, village farms practicing sustainable agriculture, homes for elderly indigent people and much more. While there, the team took part in several dedication ceremonies for ministries supported by One Great Hour of Sharing mission funds. These volunteers were able to see, first hand, what can be accomplished when time, talent and treasure are brought together for the greater good.

**Deuteronomy 11:18-21 Teach God's words to your children**

**Mark 16:19-20 An account of Jesus' ascension**

**Psalms 93 God reigns above the floods**

### CENTERING PRAYER (May 21—27, 2009)

*Gracious God, in the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you have given us eternal life and glorified your name in all the world. Refresh our souls with the living streams of your truth, that in our unity, your joy may be made complete. Amen.*

## May 21, 2009—Ascension Day

**G**arden of Grace UCC in Columbia, South Carolina welcomed two Burmese refugee women on May 22, 2008. Joy and Carol Smith-Dailey organized a group to help prepare the apartment for the young women. Marry Aung and Eh Khlo Paw were delighted that other refugees from their homeland lived nearby, and that there were enough donations to share with other refugees. The refugees are ethnic Karen and Baptists. "It's brought a lot to our attention," said Carol. "We've gotten people involved who haven't participated before. Everybody is able to participate". Rev. Andrew Sidden said, "Since we've done this resettlement project, other social justice projects have come forward from which we are moving ahead."

**Acts 1:1-11 Jesus send the apostles**

**Psalms 47 God has gone up with a shout or Psalm 93 Praise to God who reigns**

**Ephesians 1:15-23 Seeing the risen and ascended Christ**

**Luke 24:44-53 Christ present in all times and places**

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