



BROADVIEW COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

STEEPLE NEWS

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Steeple News
Volume 2, Issue 1
February 2006

SABBATICAL REFLECTIONS/MY PLAN FOR SABBATICAL

By, Pastor Dan Stern

What is Sabbatical?

The word 'sabbatical' is rooted in the Hebrew word 'sabbat', or 'Sabbath'. Biblically there was the weekly keeping of the Sabbath (Genesis 1 & 2 – "On the seventh day, God rested"), the seventh year keeping of the Sabbath (the tradition of refraining from the tilling of the land – Leviticus 25:3-4) and the 50th year keeping of the Sabbath (a time to forgive all debts – the visionary Jubilee Year – Leviticus 25:8-13). Our ancient forebears in the faith recognized the need for everyone and everything to periodically rest and start fresh, to get renewed and rejuvenated at all levels. One 'goes on sabbatical' in order to rejuvenate the body, the mind, the spirit, not to mention the whole of earth and of human society.

Please don't think of your pastor's sabbatical as a long vacation. Think of it as a "renewal leave". Sometimes there are elements of a 'Sabbath study leave' contained within it as well (see my rough schedule/plan for travel and study below), but it is not just for study. For some, especially those in the academic world, 'sabbatical' has unfortunately taken on a rather high-achievement-oriented definition – it's known as the "publish or perish" syndrome. The more ancient roots in the faith do not contain this emphasis.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Sabbath/sabbatical emphasis has always been a kind of rhythmic counterbalance to the doing of good work. Without the God-ordained gifts of rest and of play, work loses its divine purpose and becomes mere tedium. Marva Dawn, in her book, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, says this: "We cease not only from work itself, but also from the need to accomplish and be productive, from the worry and tension that accompany our modern criterion of efficiency, from our efforts to be in control of our lives as if we were God...and from the humdrum and

meaninglessness that result when life is pursued without the Lord at the center of it all." Would that all people in this workaholic, achievement-oriented society have the right to go on Sabbatical!

Beyond rest and play, a Sabbatical offers time for prayerful discernment and attentiveness to the Holy Spirit. One hopefully is asking God throughout, "What am I to do differently in the next phases of my work/life? How can I better minister to others?"

Experts observe that without sabbaticals, pastors and lay professional leaders in a congregation tend to burn out after four to seven years. Furthermore, when pastors get tired, churches get tired of their pastors! Given today's tendency toward longer pastorates, sabbaticals make a whole lot of sense.

Some additional personal thoughts and recommendations:

I have to say: there have been times of late when I have felt this sabbatical will not come one moment too soon. For one thing, I simply know I need a break from preaching if I'm to preach with grace and authority in the years to come. On other days, though, I find myself so caught up in the exciting work of renewal taking place here at Broadview, that I can scarcely imagine ANY place I'd rather be, and can hardly stand the thought of missing out for even a few months time!

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So much has been happening here! We've acquired funding for some major new outreach and evangelism projects; another wonderful newcomer inquiry group has been meeting during the month of February; and we're getting ready for that big Spring Auction on Saturday, April 29.

Some church experts, by the way, recommend that the time a pastor goes on sabbatical may also be an excellent time for a congregation to refrain from taking on major new projects, but rather, to spend their time as well reflecting and rejuvenating. So I guess my prayer is that you'll neither try to do too much nor too little while I'm away. Not spreading yourselves too thin, and allowing yourselves to patient with one another. I hope that you'll also continue to come together at worship in good numbers each Sunday, that you'll assist Gail in leading worship, be intentional about welcoming newcomers, visit the homebound, host refreshments, help open, set up, and close the building, and that you'll find – I feel confident that you will – a very inspirational pastor and preacher in the Rev. Gail Crouch. Rev. Crouch is certainly one of my own most authoritative teachers and guides, and I believe you'll be in the best of hands with her. We have a great schedule lined up for special music, improve theater, and preaching (see schedule below).

Please invite Rev. Crouch in as you do your work here; as you struggle, rejoice and grieve; receive her in your homes if you can, and accept her in the servant leadership role that has been assigned to her. I don't believe you'll be disappointed in the least. In large part because she will be with you, I know you'll get along just fine while I'm away.

My Plan For Sabbatical

During the first phase of my sabbatical, I plan to be in Nicaragua. I will be getting tutored in Spanish. I will meet some of the liberation theologians and activists I've long admired in that part of the world. I hope to gather insights on how to stay strong over the long haul, from one I admire – a veteran pastor, prophet and preaching mentor, the Rev. Grant Gallup, an Episcopal rector from Chicago now living in Managua. Rev. Gallup will be my host during most of the month (I leave on February 21 and return on March 21). During this first month, Sam will be staying home putting finishing touches on our house remodel and catching up on a busy time at work for him.

During the 2nd phase (roughly covering the month of April), Sam and I will go together on a road trip to the Midwest, taking time to visit family and friends in Montana, Minneapolis and Chicago. We hope to get some down time together just to read and relax near Galena, Illinois, where I still have a cabin that I built on some isolated wooded land there. (It is a beautiful place that I would like to make available to you too for your own needed times of rejuvenation). I intend to worship at several churches during this period, making what I hope will be helpful observations, and perhaps to sit in on creative preaching course at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN.

During the 3rd phase (May 2 to 25), Sam and I will be in Europe. Sam is in charge of the itinerary, but I do know we will be in both Paris and several of the Italian cities, and will of course be spending time with my brother Richard and family who live in Northern Italy.

I expect to periodically check in with Rev. Gail Crouch on how things are going at Broadview. I plan to send you updates on my journey from e-mail cafes around the globe so they can be published in *Steeple News*.

I will be back in the pulpit on Pentecost Sunday, June 4.

Thank you for realizing that sabbaticals 'make sense'. Thank you for making this one possible for me, the first I've ever had in nearly 20 years of ministry. I am most grateful to you.

Until June, then, and ever after too: God bless you all!

FROM THE DESK OF GAIL CROUCH

"I am very much looking forward to my time with BCUCC while Dan is on sabbatical. I am an ordained UCC pastor who served University UCC for 15 years. I was also was one of the pastors at Bellevue UCC for 3 years and served briefly last year as Acting Interim Conference Minister for the Pacific Northwest Conference. I cherish the possibilities of our journeying together for these three months. Lent and Easter are holy times and I welcome the invitation to walk through them with all of you." **Continued on pg. 3**

MEXICAN MOONLIGHT MARKET AUCTION FUNdraiser:

Broadview's 2nd annual FUNdraising auction will be held April 29.

If you are interested in volunteering for this event please contact co-coordinators, Mo Pomietto or Kay Groves.

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Gail will preach and lead worship on the following Sundays:

2/26; 3/5,12,26; 4/9,16,30; 5/14,21,28.

(Editors Note: See full worship schedule for Pastor Dan's Sabbatical time on page 4.)

Gail will also be available in the church office or for home visits a couple of days a week. These will probably be Wed. afternoons and Thursdays, although that schedule is still tentative. She welcomes calls or e-mails. The best way to assure she receives the latter is to write her at gecrouch@earthlink.net.

A NOTE FROM JOAN HENJUM

(Note: Joan will be preaching at Broadview March 19.)

I am enjoying my internship year at Eastgate Congregational UCC in Bellevue with Pastor Rick Russell and the congregation. I have preached four times and just concluded leading a four-part Bible Study on Wisdom's Women (Book of Ruth, Book of Esther, Proverbs and Song of Songs) that emphasized embodiment! I am currently meeting with a group of women to plan a "women's" service for February 5 based on the story in Luke of the anointing woman.

Eastgate UCC is part of the community providing meals for Tent City residents at the Bellevue Temple, and I joined with Eastgate folk to serve the meal on a COLD night in January. For a small congregation, the church is known for outstanding, persistent outreach.

In November, the church celebrated its 50th anniversary. For those of you who were present when we celebrated our 75th with St Paul's, do you remember the children's moment when we did a skit highlighting the leaders in the UCC from St Paul to our current president, John Thomas? That skit has inspired me to involve the youth and kids [as well as the mature folk] at Eastgate in songs, skits and art that celebrate how we will share the gifts of our past with people in the present and future. (note from Pastor Dan – our own Margaret Swalwell was among those persons instrumental in founding Eastgate.)

My part-time work at the Solanus Casey Center-- being present with homeless people and connecting folk to resources-- continues to engage and enlarge me.

It is joyful for me to re-connect with you all on my monthly furlough, when I am present in worship with you.

In Peace, Abundance, Freedom

Joan

SENIOR VERSION: JESUS LOVES ME

A minister once stated, "I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's hymn 'Jesus Loves Me'

(for the children of course) during a hymn sing, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best."

Here is a new version just for us who have white hair, or no hair at all. For us over 40 (or even those almost there) and all you others...Check out this newest version of "Jesus Loves Me". It is quite cute, so read, sing and enjoy:"

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow.
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him;
(CHORUS)

*YES, JESUS LOVES ME... YES, JESUS LOVES ME..
YES, JESUS LOVES ME FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.*

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go.
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way.
(CHORUS)

Though I am no longer young,
I have much which He's begun.
Let me serve Christ with a smile,
Go with others the extra mile.
(CHORUS)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song.
Telling me in words so clear,
"Have no fear, for I am near."
(CHORUS)

When my work on earth is done,
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love.
(CHORUS)

I love Jesus, does he know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.
(CHORUS)

**MUSIC AND WORSHIP SCHEDULE: SPRING 2006
DURING PASTOR DAN'S SABBATICAL**

February 26: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch, violin

March 1: Ash Wednesday Service at St. Pauls, 7 pm (6512 12th NW) Rev. Gail Crouch assisting, Music provided by St. Paul's.

March 5: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin, Mo Pomietto worship leader

March 12: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Elena Richmond & OK Chorale music, Deb Schumacher worship leader

March 19: Rev. Gail Crouch AWAY, Joan Henjum preaching

March 26: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching

April 2: Rev. Gail Crouch AWAY, Andrew Estep & Scott Pinegar worship leaders

April 9: Palm Sunday, Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin, Deb Schumacher worship leader

April 13: Maundy Thursday Service here at BCUCC, Rev. Gail Crouch officiating

April 16: EASTER, Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Andrew Estep worship leader

April 23: Rev. Gail Crouch AWAY, Question of the Month Sunday, Playback Theater to enact our stories and themes w/improv

April 30: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin

May 7: Rev. Gail Crouch AWAY, Scott Pinegar preacher

May 14: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin

May 21: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin

May 28: Rev. Gail Crouch preaching, Ed Crouch violin

June 4: Pentecost Sunday, Pastor Dan Stern back in pulpit

June 25: Leadership Retreat for pastor's and conference committee folks, worship leader TBA

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Mary Ann Smith	2/2
Christy Qualin	2/4
Rita Slenning	2/7
Scott Pinegar	2/21
Jan Studyvin	2/27

READINGS FEBRUARY 2006

February 5: Messenger of Good News

Isa 40:21-31; Ps 147:1-11,20c
1 Cor 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

February 12: Compassionate Healer

2 Kings 5:1-14; Ps 30
1 Cor 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45

February 19: Giver of Life

Isa 43:18-25; Ps 41
2 Cor 1:18-22; Mark 2:1-12

February 26: Glorious Mystery

2 Kings 2:1-12; Ps 50:1-6
2 Cor 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9



FAMILY CENTER

(Note: Family Center Director Kimberly Jackson is Gertrude and Vernon Work's granddaughter.)

In its fifth year of operation, the Family Center had established a track record of stabilizing hundreds of families. Building on this success, staff worked during the course of the year to increase the number of families placed directly into transitional and permanent housing. By the fall of 2005 we could boast that any family who stays in the program would be placed in long term housing. Given that the average length of stay is 37 days, this is a tremendous achievement.

Our Family Center Director Kimberly Jackson has been very active in enhancing the program for the families. There are parenting classes, on-site health screenings, mentors to assist with homework for the children, and computer classes. Kimberly's efforts have begun to receive the recognition they deserve—recently the Seattle King County Department of Public Health came to us proposing that the Family Center be used as a model in a pilot project for family crisis shelters in King County under the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. They are interested in our shelter because of the relationship that our director Kimberly has forged with
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the project organizers and the success she has achieved.

Regardless of our participation in the pilot project, it is great recognition of how far the program has come in terms of providing excellent care.

The Family Center entered the year with some significant challenges. Increasing demand for the services by homeless families necessitated the need to upgrade our overnight accommodation. Families were sleeping in the fellowship hall of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Ballard. While the hospitality of Our Redeemer's was much appreciated by the clients, the stress of transporting more and more clients to and from Ballard was taking its toll. After failing to find an appropriate site that could both house the clients and allow for services to be given on site, it was decided to renovate our existing building to serve this purpose. Construction starts on January 2, 2006 and in less than 90 days the refurbished Center will open. The staff has worked with other community agencies and shelters to accept our referrals and reduce the impact of the closure during this time on the many homeless families we serve.

JESUS IN THE FIRST & TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

**Bernard Brandon Scott & Daryl D. Schmidt,
Lecturers
February 10-11, 2006**

Workshops: Jesus in the First Century, Saturday AM;
Jesus for the Twenty-First Century, Saturday PM

All events at: Bellevue First Congregational Church,
UCC
752 108th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

For more information contact:
Bellevue First Congregational Church, UCC
425-454-5001

Or
Mark Winters
wintersmk@hotmail.com

(Charles Cressey and Pastor Dan Stern plan to attend as time allows.)

**MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE
EXPLORING TOLERANCE & PEACE**

**Mid-Winter Youth Retreat
N-Sid-Sen, February 24-26, 2006**

N-Sid-Sen is calling all youth, junior high to seniors to gather and explore what Peace means and what it means to be Tolerant. We will explore these topics in exciting ways including lots of music.

Although this retreat is open to junior high and senior high youth, program activities are separate for each age group. Gather your friends and fill out your registration. It's coming soon!

For more information contact: Sarah McDonald (509) 230-9228 or Duane Nightingale (208) 687-5255.

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
WOMEN'S RETREAT**

**Friday, March 24 – Sunday, March 26, 2006
Pilgrim First in Port Orchard**

All women of our conference are invited to come together for a weekend to nurture our mind, body and spirit and our relationships with other women. Expect to play, pray, laugh, and sing as we explore our sacred journey.

Registration deadline: March 1, 2006

For more information contact:
Mimi Hudson 206-542-4206
Sharry Nyberg 360-734-3720
Bobbi Virta 360-671-9839

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PACIFIC
NORTHWEST CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**The meeting again this year will be held at the
Yakima Conference Center, May 5-7.**

The theme of this year's annual meeting is: Love and Truth in Action.

The conference is pleased to have Ken Medema, gifted musician, songwriter, and worship leader join us. It is said that his music will move both your feet and your soul. Edith Guffey, Associate General Minister of the United Church of Christ, will help us find ways to put *love* and *truth*, as we know it, into *action*. Hollis Bredeweg, our Associate Conference Minister, will challenge us to live as faithful stewards every moment of our lives. Mark Miller, the Transitional Interim Conference Minister will be leading one of the bible studies during our workshop sessions.

Contact the Church Office for more information.

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WESTERN CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE

For those who serve in educational ministries with children, youth and adults, will be held on **October 8-11, 2006** at Zephyr Point Conference Center, Lake Tahoe, Nevada. The keynoter will be Rodger Nishioka, associate professor at Columbia Theological Seminary. The music leader will be pianist Jim Martinez. The

community builder and worship coordinator will be David Howell, the education minister at First Congregational Church, UCC in Palo Alto. For complete information please go to: www.lessonsfromtheshepherd.com/wcec.htm or contact Marcia Walker (msmarcia@starstream.net or 916-768-6690) or Donna Lindsay (reeduc@sbcglobal.net or 650-345-8397).

