

SATURDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

No First Saturday Worship services in July or August.
 We resume First Saturday worship & potlucks September 1.

Next Wednesday, July 4th, is a holiday.
 Church office is closed. Next issue—July 11.

YOUTH SPACE VOLUNTEERS

Able to help on Friday nights? Call or write Jamie McGee at xxx-xxx or xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx.

June 29	7-9	Ed Purcell	Glynn Shafer
	9-11	Pam McGee	Glynn Shafer
July 06	7-9	Liz Webb	Glynn Shafer
	9-11	Kim Singer	Glynn Shafer
July 13	7-9	Peter Springsteel	Glynn Shafer
	9-11		Glynn Shafer

From the Interim Senior Pastor

After five days in Hartford at the Civic Center for the General Synod of the United Church of Christ I have returned! What a wonderful, amazing, remarkable, eventful, stimulating, exciting, energizing and exhausting time it has been! It is difficult to summarize the experiences of these past five days... but I will try! It has been a time to meet old friends and colleagues – both those in local CT churches as well as those who now serve across the country – as well as national staff folks who I know. It was a time for me to “sit in the pew” and worship at the many and varied services – with different preachers each day, wide varieties of music and musical accompaniment, song and dance, and lots of amazing Power Point presentations on large screens. It was a time to be challenged and pushed to combine our faith and our action, to make our faith visible, to put our lives on the line! It was also easy to eat many of the vast array of unlimited cookies that were passed out on every occasion! CT UCC folks (including MCC members) baked more than 14,000 dozen cookies for Synod! Thanks to all who baked – the cookies were a huge success! I helped coordinate and assign tasks to several hundred volunteer greeters for the Civic Center throughout the five days. We volunteers became affectionately known as the “sunshine people” because of our blue t-shirts with the rising sun and our warm and extravagant welcome to all who arrived! The theme of this year’s bi-annual event was *Let it Shine – the United Church of Christ at 50 years!* We heard variations on this theme every day – musically, verbally, and visually. This Synod was the largest in 50 years – more than 9,100 folks registered; there were often crowds over 10,000!

Youth from all over the country came along with delegates representing every Conference. There were special honorary

guests; men and women were held up for special recognition for their work for the UCC.

All day Saturday, June 23rd a very special birthday 50th Anniversary celebration called Synod in the City was held; it celebrated our work as people of faith and our fifty years together as a denomination. One could hear big name speakers like Bill Moyers, Senator Barack Obama, the Rev. Peter Gomes, Walter Brueggemann or attend numerous concerts or theatre events. There were service project opportunities, cookies, exhibits galore with lots of pamphlets and goodies to collect, cookies, daily digests and assorted other handouts to read, a march for peace on Friday afternoon at rush hour, and more cookies!

Sunday afternoon we gathered for worship beginning with a procession with representatives of the four denominational streams that united 50 years ago to create the UCC. A replica of the Amistad (which had actually set sail for England on Thursday) was carried in to evoke **Congregationalism**; a basin and towel were brought to symbolize the **Evangelical** strand; a poster bearing the “Herald of Gospel Liberty” representing the **Christian Church**; and a chalice was brought in to represent the **Reformed** tradition. There were representatives of the UCC’s racial/ethnic constituencies, representatives from the UCC affiliated seminaries, colleges and academies, and representatives from each of the 38 Conferences – it felt like the start of the Olympics! The UCC general minister and president, the Rev. John Thomas, preached and challenged us to consider along with Elijah “what are we doing here?” (from the story of Elijah in I Kings 19) He said, “Go back home from this cave. Go back home and find Elisha who will succeed you. Go back, UCC, into your next 50 years! Find, commission, enlist and inspire. Faithfulness – and presence – is found not on the run, but on the way home to our future.” We then shared in the sacrament of Communion together, passing the bread and cup to one another throughout the entire stadium of over 10,000 gathered.

Sunday night thru Tuesday afternoon the delegates got down to the real business of Synod. Each delegate was assigned to a Committee to work on one of the 12 resolutions scheduled for consideration. Committees worked long and hard to find common ground on a wide variety of controversial issues; each decided what final recommended action should come before the plenary. Log on to www.ucc.org for final votes, entire speeches of some of the more significant voices and video replays of some presenters. On Monday Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, challenged the delegates and visitors to work for health care coverage for all children. On Tuesday Lynn Redgrave (who resides and worships in a UCC church in Kent, CT) shared her touching and engaging story of the faith journey that followed her breast cancer. Like many of the presenters at Synod she brought Synod-goers to their feet with a standing ovation. All in all – a very significant and moving five days! And you will hear more about it!



Pastor Barbara