



Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS

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February-March 2015

Churches call for living wages in the state

Actions include banners, visits to Walmart, and showing 'Inequality for All'

Fourteen Seattle churches in eight denominations, including All Pilgrims and Plymouth in the UCC, are flying a banner that says, "Living Wages for All!" over their entryways as an expression of their participation in the Living Wage campaign of the Church Council of Greater Seattle (CCGS).

The year after Jenn Hagedorn served as a UCC justice intern, living upstairs at All Pilgrims, she taught a class on living wages at Plymouth UCC that drew three members of Pilgrim, including Steve Clagett.

Class participants read a book, *The Politics of Jesus* by Obery Hendricks, and heard speakers who were involved in organizing workers in the hotel trade, who were in the Service Employees
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Two members of All Pilgrims represented its Mission/Outreach Committee in signing and attending this presentation of a letter to Walmart Lynnwood management requesting that an employee fired for striking for improved safety at the store by rehired. Photos courtesy of Steve Clagett

Scott Ward issues invitation to Annual Meeting

As vice moderator of the conference and part of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Scott Ward of Magnolia UCC in Seattle said he has visited a number of PNC churches, because the board is meeting in different churches.

"We talk finances, personnel, programs and processes. We talk churches, camps and committees. We talk about the role of the conference," said Scott.

"One thing that continues to push its way into these meetings is the truth that we, as church, are in a trying, uncertain and challenging time," he said.

Many congregations are having conversations on how to grow, balance the budget or maintain their staff and/or facility. Some congregations are having conversations around how to survive.

Scott said they continually hear churches asking, "What are we to do?"

While at times it's discouraging to him, he's upbeat on the theme for Annual Meeting 2015 is "Spring Forth."

Inspired by Isaiah 49: "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

"Doesn't that sound hopeful? Doesn't it sound promising?" Scott asked.

"Now more than ever we need to come together. We need to gather our congregations. We need to share and inspire, explore and celebrate with each other," he said. "What are we doing that is making a difference? What are we doing that is drawing us deeper? What are

they doing that has found greater meaning?"

Aware how easy it is for each congregation to become caught up in feeling alone without support, he believes Annual Meeting's theme is timely.

"Annual Meeting is a time to enlarge the church family," Scott said. "Together our resources, ideas and conversation are abundant and we can begin to answer the question, "What are we to do?" Together we can 'Spring Forth.'

"God is working through all of us, calling us to do a new thing," he said, inviting people to come to Annual Meeting "to fill and be filled."

One new approach will be two sessions of mini-workshops, with present-

In congregational conflicts,

When we try to win, everyone may lose

Conference Comments



By The Rev.
Mike Denton
Conference
Minister



We stop.

We pray.

We listen.

We pray.

We forgive.

We pray.

We plan.

We pray.

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Its no surprise that, once in awhile, I get a call from a church in conflict. Most of these are of four different kinds: 1) the folks in the church don't have enough information to come to some sort of final decision; 2) the church is avoiding a decision that they know will upset a good number of people one way or another; 3) there is a disagreement about the style, vision or reason for their life together, or 4) there is disagreement about leadership styles and practices.

The vast majority of time, people come into these conversations with the full expectation they'll figure out some compromised decision, a different understanding of the situation or even something new. The work isn't easy but its good work. Its congregationalism at its best. These are healthy conflicts to have and every church, even if they don't call me, should have this kind of conversation once in awhile.

However, there's one element that, if added it, will ruin the conversation every time and, unfortunately, it's becoming more and more common. If a group or individual involved in the conflict insists on winning instead of negotiating, the conversation is almost over before it begins and will cause long-term damage to the congregation.

Congregationalism, as it applies to decision making, means that the local congregation discerns how to serve Christ in their context and makes decisions that are best in service of that mission as well as the health of the congregation that is called to carry out that mission. When people insist on what will best serve themselves, that's not congregationalism but a negative form of individualism.

That's not to suggest that, as individuals, we shouldn't share within the congregation what we like, what we prefer or what we find helpful. It doesn't mean we don't say when our feelings are hurt or don't express our opinions when a decision is made or suggested that we disagree with. To hear and share these things in the community called a congregation is part of our commitment to each other.

This gives the congregation an opportunity to respond to and serve each other. It gives us an opportunity to seek out a better way.

We have to go into these conversations, however, with the clear understanding that the response or the decision is not ours alone, in the end. Its the congregation's. We may disagree with it. We may want to work to change the congregation's opinion.

However, the means by which we disagree or work to change the congregation's opinion should have limits. Congregational activism is great but that's different from declaring war on those you disagree with. The first is defined by the opportunity to build relationships. The second is defined by the way it destroys them.

We have churches that have gone through these wars. In some cases, these wars are a far off memory that is still full of pain and is still effecting how the congregation makes its decisions today. In others, these wars are current or recent and the congregations themselves are barely holding on.

There are also too many congregations whose doors closed long ago and whose names we no longer remember.

We all lose when we try to only to win. At these moments, we are only at our worst.

Its not just us, of course.

Forgive what might seem like a tangent here but this style of being in relationship is not just destroying churches but it's also destroying families, communities and our country as a whole.

It might be suggested we're post-denominational, post-racial or post-this or post-that. To some degree, that's true; but only to a degree. The reality is that although we might be post any of these larger categorizations, we're becoming increasingly entrenched in smaller and smaller categories and groups.

Those things that used to be secondary ways of categorizing who we might be are becoming primary and the market and political forces that benefit have us plugged in to all these categories so that they can manipulate us better. They need us to defend them to the death.

If we want to find our way to a better way that doesn't idealize the past or accept this as our future, we have to, well, calm down a bit and step away from our insistence on winning.

We have to do things differently. I really don't know all the answers here, but in the church we need to start with our faith.

I think it might go something like this:

We stop. We pray. We listen. We pray. We ask for forgiveness. We pray. We offer forgiveness. We pray. We make a plan to move forward. We pray. We live in to grace. We pray. We love. We pray. We promise that if we find ourselves heading down the wrong path again, we'll repeat this cycle until we get it right, and then we pray once more...

Celebration of Deeg Nelson's ministry will be on March 8

A celebration of Deeg Nelson's 12 years as managing director at Pilgrim Firs Camp and Conference Center will be held from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, March 8, at Pilgrim Firs.

There will be stories, music, fellowship and the chance to thank Deeg for his faithful leadership and wish him well as he pursues his passion for environmental justice.

A basket will be provided for cards and cash gifts.

Katy Lloyd of the Outdoors Ministries Task Force is compiling good wishes from those around the conference who are unable to come at revkaty@nwlink.com. Cards can be sent to Pilgrim Firs: Deeg Nelson c/o Ginny Springer, Pilgrim Firs Camp and Conference Center, 3318 SW Lake Flora Rd., Port Orchard WA 98367.

Transitions announced

Darrell Goodwin-Moultry was installed as Liberation UCC's authorized UCC minister at 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 8 in January.

Leslie Moughty, who was ordained Jan. 18 at Kirkland Congregational UCC, has been called to serve First Congregational UCC in Brainerd, Minn., where Linda Crowe, formerly of Veradale UCC, has been serving as interim.

Kizzie Jones was honored in January during a Farewell Party at Horizon House for her 18 years of ministry as director of spiritual care at Horizon House Retirement Home. In retirement, she plans to spend more time with family and writing more Dachshund stories.

The new director of spiritual care is Linda Purdy, a UCC pastor who has served as chaplain at Providence Hospice. She brings experience in congregational care, preaching and chemical dependency counseling.

A memorial service to celebrate the life of **Jim Smucker**, will be held Sunday, June 28 at the Amistad Chapel, 700 Prospect Ave., in Cleveland, Ohio. He was Wash-

ington North Idaho conference minister from 1967 to 1971, then New York conference minister until 1987, and volunteered for the national UCC Office for Church in Society after retiring to live in Washington.

Conference News Briefs

University Congregational UCC at 4515 16th Ave NE in Seattle will hold a Service of Memory and Thanksgiving at 3 p.m., Sunday, March 29, for

teacher, author, scholar and friend **Marcus Borg** who died Jan. 21 at his home in Eastern Oregon.

Interfaith Advocacy Day set

The Faith Action Network's Inter-Faith Advocacy Day is Thursday, Feb. 19, at the The United Churches of Olympia, 110 11th Avenue SE, Olympia, gathering people around the theme, "Act on the Dream: Invest in the Common Good."

It is an opportunity for people of all faiths to bring elected leaders the voice of compassion and justice. Participants will meet with legislators and/or their staff, join in workshops on the 2015 FAN legislative agenda, which is available at fanwa.org.

For information, call 206-625-9790.

University Congregational offers two training programs

University Congregational UCC is offering a Creative Facilitation training and Safer Church Training on Friday, Feb 27, and Saturday, Feb 28.

The Creative Facilitation Training, from 6 to 9 p.m., Friday, and 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, offers games, activities and discussion tactics for working with groups, and is an opportunity to meet other folks doing this kind of work.

The Safer Church Training, from 1 to 4 p.m., Saturday, uses the Praesidium Training, which is used for the PNC online trainings. It will include viewing videos, facilitated discussion and time for reflection.

Alan Wong, who helps high schools, middle schools, universities, non-profits, churches and other groups gain the skills they need to serve more effectively and creatively, will lead the Creative Facilitation training. He offers team-building and empowerment programs for both young people and adults.

The Safer Church Training will be led by UCUC Pastors Peter Ilgenfritz.

The church is offering the training at no cost through funding from the Phyllis and Ralph Swanson Endowment for Children and Youth for Alan Wong and the cost of some food, said Margaret Irribarra, director of youth ministries.

To register, visit <http://bit.ly/cftraining15>.

Course on UCC history/polity will be given at General Synod

A course on the History, Theology and Polity of the United Church of Christ will be offered at General Synod this summer, June 24-July 1, taught by the Rev. Elizabeth Nordbeck and the Rev. Jonathan New of Andover Newton Theological Seminary.

Members in Discernment, clergy persons seeking dual standing or privilege of vocation, and interested laypersons are welcome to enroll in the polity course with the option of earning seminary credit or a certificate.

For information, visit <http://www.ucc-files.com/pdf/gs30-synodpolityflyer.pdf>.

Applications due for 2015-16 UCC's Young Adult Service

Justice Leadership Program manager Elizabeth Dickinson is calling young adult candidates for the national Young Adult Service Communities (YASC) network.

Six YASC communities around the country are making preparations with community agencies, justice leadership workshops and congregational hospitality to welcome young adult leaders on behalf of the whole church for a year of engagement at the intersection of congregation and world.

Young adults of ages 21 to 35 will serve from September 2015 through July 2016 in Seattle (Justice Leadership Program), Bethesda, MD, Westford, Mass. (near Boston), Philadelphia, Penna., Granite City, Ill. (near St. Louis), and Chicago, Ill.

Housing, a food stipend, health insurance and assistance with application for student loan forbearance provided. It's a year that transforms lives of young people and the world.

Applications are at http://www.ucc.org/volunteer_yasc and are due Feb. 15 or call 206-320-0432 or visit justiceleadership.org.

CCGS organizes churches to support living wages

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International Union (SEIU), and were involved with Puget Sound SAGE.

“Out of that, All Pilgrims and Plymouth decided to join the banner campaign, and send representatives to the Church Council of Greater Seattle Living Wage Working Group,” Steve said.

The CCGS banner campaign was started by Darel Grothaus, an Episcopalian formerly with Plymouth, and by Briana Frenchmore, a former UCC justice intern with the CCGS.

Other churches displaying the banner are Lutheran, Baptist, Episcopal, Catholic, United Methodist, Disciples of Christ and Unitarian.

On Black Friday, the busy pre-Christmas shopping day, All Pilgrims Christian Church - Disciples of Christ/UCC and Plymouth were among churches that went to Walmart stores around Seattle to unfurl banners expressing solidarity with workers as part of the OUR (Organization United for Respect at) Walmart campaign.

There were more than 60 Black Friday actions across Washington.

OUR Walmart connects Walmart workers with the community, including churches, to pressure Walmart to offer living wages and better working conditions. The campaign followed an unsuccessful effort of the United Food and Commercial Workers union to organize workers about 10 years ago.

Six members of All Pilgrims went to the South Everett Walmart. Plymouth sent 31 members to a Lynnwood Walmart where they delivered letters to employees that church members had written following worship services.

All Pilgrims Church members unfurled a banner in front of the store that read, “Members of All Pilgrims Church love Walmart Workers.” The



Church and community members unfurl banner to express their solidarity with the workers.



Banner hangs over entry to All Pilgrims UCC/DOC Church.

manager turned them away politely. Then they unfurled a banner on the public sidewalk that read, “The All Pilgrims and Everett communities say ‘Walmart, share the wealth!’”

They handed out 38 refrigerator magnets inside the store to employees and stickers to customers expressing solidarity with Walmart workers’ efforts to seek living wages and better working conditions.

Steve and another All Pilgrims member recently went with a group of 20 to another Lynnwood Walmart to support a worker who was fired when he went on a strike that coincided with other actions nationally. They

read a letter to the store manager signed by 15 organizations, including All Pilgrims’ Mission/Outreach Committee.

After coming to Seattle

in 1977, Steve, who studied economics and urban studies at Dartmouth and earned a law degree at Wayne State University in Detroit, focused his career on low-income housing development. He started Common Ground in 1980 with the CCGS and the YMCA. It grew to develop 7,700 housing units with social service and church groups in Washington.

Now retired, Steve is struck by the extent to which the U.S. has lost a large portion of its middle class since 1980 and the efforts of those getting richer to maintain that trend. He now devotes significant time to combating income inequality.

Steve owns two copies of the film, “Inequality for All,” and arranges for churches to show his copies and a third copy that Plymouth purchased

for the PNC.

Steve cites “as outrageous, if true,” stories he has heard of large low-wage companies teaching their employees how to apply for subsidized housing and food stamps rather than paying them living wages.

The CCGS’s web page on living wages asks: “What would our community look like if all people could find a job and if those jobs paid enough money for individuals and families to be self sufficient? What if all workers earned a living wage?”

The CCGS wants people to learn how their faith calls them to work for economic justice. Living wages are about access to basics, such as nutrition, shelter, health care, transportation, education and good working conditions, so people can live in dignity and “participate in the fullness of life God envisions for all people.”

The website, thechurchcouncil.org, offers bulletin inserts, fliers, and information on its “God and Money” curriculum, living wage forums, living wage principles and the banners.

Steve invites UCC members to a meeting, organized by Plymouth member Don Bell at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 21 at Third Place Books, 17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Park. Participants at this gathering will explore ways to help PNC churches implement the Living Wage resolution adopted by the 2014 PNC Annual Meeting.

**To show
‘Inequality for All,’
contact Steve Clagett,
clagett@comcast.net
206 795-9475**

Mike Denton speaks at Eastern Washington event

PNC Conference Minister Mike Denton offered theological reflections on the Jan. 31 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference theme, “Raising Prophetic Voices: Faith Communities Advocate for Justice.”

Believing speech and action are about biography, he shared his context as a sixth generation pastor in a family with a tradition of involvement in social justice as an expression of faith. Adding to his insights is his experience as parent of a two-year-old, Leo, who changes his world and worldview.

“In raising prophetic voices, we, like my son Leo, need to be sure we know we are loved, our basic needs are cared for and we care for others,” said Mike, expressing his pride when Leo first shared a book with another child.

“We need to set boundaries, encourage and then step out of the way,” he said. “Our goal as parents is an ongoing relationship with him, not him fulfilling our dreams for him.”

Just as children are at different places as they develop, Mike said that communities of faith are places where people start at different points, moving from faith to service to social justice.

“A holy tweak or nudge may come in the news or an experience,” he said. “It may sit there for a while.

For some, interest in social justice may have started with signing a petition, from listening or from praying.

“It may stop there, but at a the time of a holy tweak, it may become bigger,” he said.

Mike said charity often grows from relationships with people. Learning of a need, “we may give what is needed—money or a can of black beans. Sometimes, that’s where it stops,” he said.

Sometimes charity is a part of a bigger delivery network that has structure.



Mike Denton explores “Raising Prophetic Voices” and calls for building the role of elders.

“That’s service. We make time for it. It’s not excess. We build relationships within the faith community,” Mike said. “In service, something else happens. We recognize what is happening around an individual life and also that it is happening because of a systemic issue.”

All along, it’s necessary to pray, study and listen, he said.

Some are called to service, and some are called to advocacy, which brings an intentional increase in risk.

“Each step is not a clear progression,” Mike said.

The largest number of people recognize a call to give to a charity.

The next largest group participates in a service.

The smallest number are involved in advocacy for justice.

In the process, friendships emerge, and involvement shifts from time to mutual support.

“Then, once in a while, we glimpse what the church community is called to build, the Kingdom of God, a world filled with love, care, mutuality and more,” Mike said.

The role of elder needs to emerge today, he said, given the increasing amounts of gray in faith communities. Mike observes that most congregations are intergenerational, many with up to five generations involved.

“Most U.S. institutions are set up for two-and-a-half or three generations. Then people retire and die,” he said. “We do not know how to do the role of elder. We need to redevelop that role. We need to encourage the younger generation to listen closely.”

In the last five years, Mike has seen significant moves by adults to listen to ideas.

- The Occupy movement is part of movements around the world that have put economic inequality on the front burner for leaders.

“We refuse to accept abuse of the poor,” Mike added.

- The environmental movement grew from young people. The world calls people to change their ways.

- GLBT concerns and conflict have led to changes in the social system. I support marriage equality.

- Black Lives Matter has led black youth to expose racial and gender inequality police brutality and the anger of those who mourn too soon.

“They challenge that the racist criminal justice industrial complex is based on slavery and oppression,” Mike said.

- The only cultural group to die more are American Indians, who have experienced genocide, neglect and abuse of their rights.

“We need to listen as elders and wisely join when we are invited to lay our lives on the line so prophetic voices emerge,” Mike said.

“We offer our facts, speak and listen. We join voices and call others to join. We keep our eyes on the local and bigger pictures,” he said. “We speak out when we see something is wrong. It’s a call and gift to recognize the need to be challenged on racism.

“We need to look for ways to raise our prophetic voices and look for ways we need to be challenged,” he said.

“Fifty years ago, we did not have an idea we would retire and help our parents. Five generation photos mean there’s more of that,” he said.

“We need to ask what we need to be better helpers,” Mike said, suggesting ways to support younger clergy, and helping establish a culture of elders.

After being leaders and up front, there is need for the role of elder to develop, so people have voice and respect when they have less energy.

“Relinquishment is a gift for those who follow,” Mike said. “It’s important also to honor the experience of youth, to respect youth, rather than work to be respected by youth.”

For information, email revdenton@gmail.com.

Interns organize events to advocate for housing

After internships in direct services with abused children and hospice clients, Honah Thompson signed up for the UCC's Young Adult Service Community and was placed in Seattle because she wanted to learn about advocacy.

She is one of four interns working with the Pacific Northwest Conference's Justice Leadership Program to serve Seattle agencies and congregations from September 2014 through July 2015.

This is Honah's gap year between graduating from Chapman University in sociology and religious studies in May. She plans to begin a master's in social work. She grew up in First Congregational UCC in Santa Rosa, Calif., and serves Plymouth in Seattle.

Working with the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, her recent focus has been to promote participation in the Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day on Tuesday, Feb. 17 in Olympia.

She has helped plan the rally, workshops on pending legislation and opportunities for people to meet with legislators to tell them about the housing issues that concern them.

About 600 advocates from education, medicine and faith communities usually come to raise concern about the growing numbers of homeless people and the need for safe, affordable housing.

Next she is helping develop and promote a May Conference for Ending Homelessness in Tacoma. She is recruiting workshop presenters.

In the fall, she participated in a follow-up celebration that was part of the Emerging Advocates Programs (EAP) in Yakima. It was the third session to empower individuals experiencing homelessness and teach them how to voice their needs and advocate for themselves.



Honah Thompson and Hillary Coleman, right, learn about the Emerging Advocates Program in Yakima.

Photo courtesy of Washington Low Income Housing Alliance

"They shared actions they had taken and reported on progress," said Honah.

Homelessness is also the focus of YASC intern Hillary Coleman, who works with the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness. She was also at the Yakima event.

Honah realizes from her work on the advocacy day that people do have an impact on legislation and that representatives do listen to their constituents.

"People have more power than they think they have," she said, noting that while some may assume legislators have their minds made up, she believes representatives listen to constituents who are passionate about housing or homelessness.

"They care," Honah said, adding that it's important for constituents to thank legislators.

Working with homeless individuals has changed her perspectives about homeless people. She sees the realities of their lives in contrast to stigmas about people who are homeless.

"Most work hard. They are not lazy, nor do they want to be homeless. Some live in their cars and go to work because they cannot earn enough to pay for housing," she said. "It's important to understand individual's stories.

"We need legislation that will increase affordable hous-

ing so they can find housing," Honah said.

As Plymouth's intern, she is also working to educate people on the Breakfast After the Bell Bill before the legislature this year. It would assure that eligible children be able to eat breakfast at the start of a school day, even if the bus or their parents cannot bring them to school in time for the breakfast that is served before school.

Hillary, who serves at All Pilgrims Christian Church (UCC/Disciples of Christ), helped the Coalition on Homelessness plan the Homeless Youth Advocacy Summit and a voter registration drive for homeless and unstably housed people.

She also helped organize the 35th annual King County One Night Count, involving more than 800 volunteers who walked the streets and counted 3,772 homeless individuals between 2 and 5 a.m., Jan. 23.

Hillary, who said it was a 21 percent increase from 2014, hopes that count will stir people to act.

She said her commitment to social justice comes from growing up at University Congregational UCC in Seattle.

Along with involvement with an agency and a UCC congregation, the four interns participate with others in the UCC in Justice Leadership Program "Faith and Justice Classes."

The other interns are Amber Dickson, who is working with the Faith Action Network, and Emmanuel Mancilla, who is working with the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

The Winter/Spring sessions are underway. Classes begin with a potluck at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Classes in January and early February were on "Liberation Theology: A Biblical/Theological Grounding for Justice."

On Feb. 24, March 3 and 17, Cynthia Moe-Lobeda and Freddie Helmiere will lead an interactive discussion of their book, "Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Economic-Ecologic Vocation," at The Collaboratory, 5623 Rainier Ave. S.

University UCC pastor Amy Roon will lead the March 24 class on "A Parable's Lens on Oppression," at Keystone UCC, 5019 Keystone Pl. N.

April 7, 21, 28 and May 5, Lauren Cannon of Keystone UCC is leading classes on "The Practice of Nonviolence" at The Collaboratory.

On May 19, Cory Maclay leads a class at Keystone UCC on "Skills for Social Change: Changing the World One Meeting at a Time."

A final class on "New Contextual Theologies" will be May 16 at Keystone.

For information, call 206-320-0432 or visit www.justice-leadership.org.

Committee expresses solidarity with Korean church

The Global Ministries Committee, a joint venture with the Northwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Pacific Northwest Conference of the UCC, met in late January and worked together to establish goals and objectives for 2015.

"Our committee is committed to helping to educate, inform and inspire our local churches to become Global Ministries Partner Churches," said Lon Rycraft, UCC co-chair and pastor at Normandy Park UCC. "We welcome opportunities to visit churches and share some of the programs and work of Global Ministries around the world.

"I am constantly reminded what we do together makes a difference in peoples lives. We bring hope and, most importantly, the opportunity to support our sisters and brothers around the world," he said.

The Global Ministries Committee currently has outreach through partnerships with churches in the East Seoul Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Berlin Brandenburg Synod of the United Evangelical Church in Germany. In addition, it is currently supporting missionaries, like Kim and Eric Free who are serving in Mozambique.

Learning at the recent meeting that on Dec. 22, about 60 Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency (SMPA) intruded into the Mintongsun Peace Church in Gimpo (part of Seoul), member Jim Spraker encouraged the committee to send a letter to the Rev. Lee Jeok, the pastor. Police searched the church compound and day care center for 10 hours,

taking down the cross and dismantling the altar.

The letter said that the pastor and church have been working in solidarity with the local people in opposing the reconstruction of the Aegibong tower that has provoked conflicts between North and South Korea.

The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) called it "repression of the freedom" to accuse the pastor's peace work of being "anti-state activity." The council called for the Seoul police to apologize. On Jan. 30, police visited the NCCCK headquarters and made an official apology.

On behalf of the regional Global Ministries Committee, Jim and Lillian Moir, the Disciples co-chair, composed the following letter to Rev. Jeok.

"The Global Ministries Committee of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ in Northwest Washington State heard with great sorrow about the intrusion by the Seoul Metropolitan Police into your church.

"We recognize how painful this event was and remains for you and your members. We pray that you will remain steadfast in your mission of peace and reconciliation. Denial of your freedom to practice your faith and mission affects all your brothers and sisters in Christ. When one suffers, we all suffer.

"We believe that the church is a sacred place for Christian people and the place from which mission begins. When we allow that mission to be trampled upon, all of us are in danger of the same treatment.

"We appreciate the apology received from the SMPA, but that does not diminish the pain you feel. In spite of the apology, the issue of the freedom of mission remains unresolved.

"The Christian Church has often been a voice for peace and reconciliation in the midst of conflict. We support all who work for the resolution of conflict and who seek peace. The Mintongsun Peace Church has been such a voice and we support you in that effort."

Lon and Lillian signed as co-chairs of the Global Ministries Committee.

Lon recently reported that they received a quick response to their letter from the Mintongsun Peace Church and the National Council of Churches in Korea.

The Mintongsun Church replied: "I believe Global Ministries gives peace a chance and is life changing. Your continuing support and prayers are a testament to our ministry together!"

The NCCCK wrote: "On behalf of the NCCCK, we would like to thank you for the letter that you sent. It strengthens our resolve when we hear that fellow Christians half a world away are concerned and praying for our cause.

"The Rev. Lee Jeok was also grateful and encouraged by your letter and hopes for continued thoughts and prayers during this difficult time."

Lon cited this exchange as one example of how the Global Ministries Committee invites members of congregations in the conference and region to "imagine what is possible!"

For information, email lon@npucc.org.

Annual Meeting theme and format invite new ideas for churches

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ers sharing on their topics in three, 20-minute sessions, giving people to share ideas and resources, report on a ministry or project, and collaborate.

Tara Leininger of Metaline Falls, who is on the worship committee, said there will be the opening worship on Friday

night with Conference Minister Mike Denton preaching, an energetic morning worship on Saturday, a vesper service as part of the Saturday evening social time, and outside, weather permitting, and the Sunday worship will feature the volunteer choir under the direction of Donivan Johnson from

Metaline Falls, the celebration of Communion and keynote speaker Quinn Caldwell preaching.

Quinn is pastor and teacher of Plymouth Congregational UCC in Syracuse, N. Y., and author of *All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas*. He is a member of the

UCC Stillspeaking Writers' Group and author for the Stillspeaking Daily Devotionals.

Conference moderator Andrea CastroLang said that resolutions to help shape priorities are due by the March 21 Board of Directors meeting.

For information, visit www.pnucc.org.

As Midwinters come and go, summer approaches

Although the weather may be a bit dreary or even soggy there's still a campfire to sit in front of at N-Sid-Sen or Pilgrim Firs, said Mark Boyd, managing director of N-Sid-Sen.

Along with that warm fire beckoning, it's easy to find warm friends and even warmer food. These are the places to be when it's time for a break, a time to step away to breathe.

"Camp is the place to warm the body, the heart and the soul," he said, inviting people to contact the camps and find out "what is happening at your home at the lake" and to "come home to camp."

Both camps keep busy



N-Sid-Sen is a place to relax by a fire.

Photos courtesy of Mark Boyd

mation, perpetual connection to the digital universe, and endless texts, tweets and instant messages, camp offers an opportunity to unplug in order to connect in new ways with God and others.

"We invite campers to relish the spotty cell reception of camp and delve into seven scripture passages that reveal the transformative power of the Holy Spirit," Mark said.

"We will explore many ways to get charged up in the world around and inside us as we gather together in any one of the many events happening at N-Sid-Sen and Pilgrim Firs," he added.

Summer camp brochures are in the mail and registration is open at www.n-sid-sen.org.

2015 N-Sid-Sen camp schedule is:

Junior & Senior High Midwinter Retreat

March 13 to 15 - grades 7 to 12

Women's Retreat - May 15 to 17
Lynn Nelson & Kaye Hult

Camp Staff Retreat - May 15 to 17
Katy Lloyd & Kristen Almgren

Leadership Retreat

June 12 to 14

Mike Denton

Work Camp - June 15 to 20

Mark Boyd

Young Adult Camp

June 21-23

Kid's Camp - July 5 to 8

Trudy Lambert & Gabe Peterson

Intermediate Camp - July 5 to 11

Bob Watrous & Kim Schulz

Senior High Aqua Camp

July 12 to 18

Tony Kliment & Lyn Stultz

Family Camp #1

July 26 to Aug. 1

Amy Johnson & Ryan Lambert

Junior High Aqua Camp

Aug. 2 to 8

Dana Sprenkle & Sarah McDonald

Family Camp #2 - Aug. 9 to 15

Andy CastroLang & Jan Shannon

For information, call 208-689-3489 or visit n-sid-sen.org.

throughout the year welcoming groups of all types— yoga groups, recovery groups, church groups and even a youth gathering or two.

"The PNC just finished up our two Midwinter gatherings at Pilgrim Firs with great success," he said, noting that Ginny Springer, 11 years office administrator at Pilgrim Firs, has been serving as the acting managing director since Deeg Nelson resigned as of Jan. 6.

"Many happy campers and tired counselors came home from Midwinter there feeling revitalized and anxiously awaiting summer to arrive,"

Mark said.

For those who missed the Midwinter gatherings at Pilgrim Firs, there's another chance to come sit by the fire at camp.

March 13 to 15, Midwinter returns to N-Sid-Sen with Dana Sprenkle and Sarah McDonald leading youth on a weekend full of food, fun, faith and frolicking. They are working on the theme of "All In."

The summer curriculum for 2015 is "Power UP! Living in the Spirit."

Mark suggested that in a time characterized by the relentless bombardment of infor-



Two campers frolick in the sunset by Lake Coeur d'Alene.

2015 Pilgrim Firs camp & retreat season

Deeg Nelson's Farewell

2-4 p.m., March 8 - see p. 3

Spring Cleaning/Work Camp

May 1 to 3 sign up on UltraCamp

Young Adult Retreat

June 19 to 21

Jen Towner & Max Aquino

Work Camp

June 18 to 21

Ginny Springer

Senior High Camp

June 28 to July 4

Kristen Almgren &

Andrew Conley-Holcam

Junior High Camp

July 5 to 11

Rich Porter & Susan Andresen

Kids Camp

July 12 to 15

Staci Schulmerich

Intermediate Camp

July 12 to 18

Katy Lloyd

Family Camp

Aug. 16 to 20

Rich & Leslie Porter

For information, call 360-876-2031.