

November 2007

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

Faith UCC
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Rev. Scott B. Martin



Religious Pluralism and the United States Senate

Did you hear about the controversy in the U.S. senate over of all things the opening prayer? It seems that a Hindu priest was invited by one of the members to give the opening prayer.

Here is what Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council had to say about it: **“No one can legitimately challenge the fact that the God America refers to in the pledge, our national motto, and other places is the monotheistic God of the Jewish and Christian faith. There is no historic connection between America and the polytheistic creed of the Hindu faith. I seriously doubt that Americans want to change the motto, ‘In God we Trust,’ which Congress adopted in 1955, to ‘In gods we Trust.’ That is essentially what the United States Senate did.”**

Several things are of interest about this statement. First of all isn't it interesting the motto "In God we Trust" did not even come about till 1955. The country got along just fine without this motto for 175 years before coming up with it in the age of McCarthyism and

the cold war with "atheistic communism" in the USSR.

Also of note is that Islam which is certainly at least as monotheistic as Judaism and Christianity isn't allowed to join in supporting this motto, even though every good Muslim would be happy to do so. Of course there weren't very many Muslims in the U.S. in 1955, let alone in 1776.

Hinduism does not have a creed with a list of things one has to believe. While Hinduism does indeed have many avatars that are considered deities, many Hindus do in fact believe that behind all these deities there is only one God. Hindus of either persuasion would also happily subscribe to the current motto.

It is true that there weren't many Hindus in this country in 1955 and probably none in 1776, but there are now. There are hundreds of thousands of Hindu U.S. citizens and the Senate must honor this on an equal footing with Jews and Christians. If there are going to be opening prayers of any kind in the senate these prayers need to represent the America of today not the America of 231 years ago or even 50 years ago!

Hunger and Poverty on Spaceship Earth in 2007

“There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. Everybody’s crew.”

Marshal McLuhan

What is poverty? To come home and see your children go hungry and not have anything to give them.

Facts for Action:

1.1 billion people are forced to survive on less than a dollar a day – one of every six people in the world.

According to the United Nations, progress toward cutting the proportion in half by 2015 is on track. However this is largely because of progress in Asia, while other regions, especially sub-Saharan Africa, are staying the same or falling further behind.

The proportion of the world’s population living on less than \$2 a day: almost 50% (2.8 billion)

Over 800 million people – almost three times the population of the United States – are undernourished, meaning they do not get enough food to lead active, healthy lives.

The percentage of the world’s population suffering chronic hunger has fallen somewhat in recent years, but the decline is slowing and is not currently sufficient to ensure this Millennium Development Goal will be met by 2015. Furthermore, the actual number of people suffering from hunger is increasing.

Every day, almost 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes – one child every five seconds.

It’s not too late to sign up for the New Braunfels CROP Walk. It will be held Sunday afternoon November 18th. Registration at 2 p.m. at New Braunfels Presbyterian. The Walk begins at 2:30 and will go through Landa Park. We have pledge forms in the church office.



Don’t forget to set your clocks back an hour when you go to bed Saturday November 3rd.



Our annual Fall Festival will be held Sunday October 25th from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Children and are invited to come in their Halloween costumes for an evening of fun, food and games. Come on out and join the fun. Bring a friend or neighbor!

**Pizza Party & UCC National
Webstreaming Event
Sunday November 4th 5:30 p.m.**

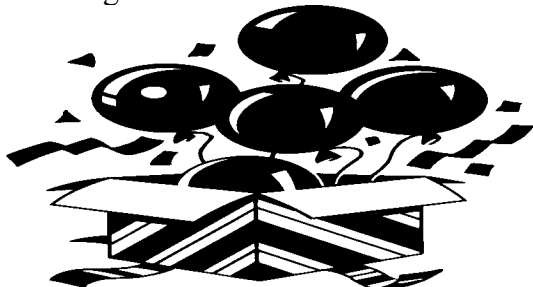
Come and join us for pizza and fellowship on All Saints Sunday!

Culminating a year of big-time, churchwide celebrations, the UCC will close its 50th anniversary observance with an exuberant year-in-review webcast. The 20 minute program will be broadcast at 6 p.m. (CST).

Some of you viewed the kickoff UCC Jubilee webcast last November. “We feel it’s important that we mark the closing of this milestone year in a significant way,” says the Rev. J. Bennett Guess, the UCC’s acting director of communications. “And it’s important that we take a look back at the tremendous events, projects and resources that helped us remember and honor the 1957 union that brought the UCC into being.”

It is also hoped that this event will help UCC members and churches look forward to our 51st year and beyond. This will once again be an interactive webcast, with UCC members and churches able to submit short reflections on how the anniversary impacted them.

The webcast can also be accessed on you home computer by going to <ucc.org>



**Church Potluck & Program
Sunday November 11th**

On Sunday November 11th we will have a potluck after church. Bring a dish to share. After lunch we will show a DVD on the upcoming CROP Walk and have a brief program on hunger issues, using material from Church World Service.

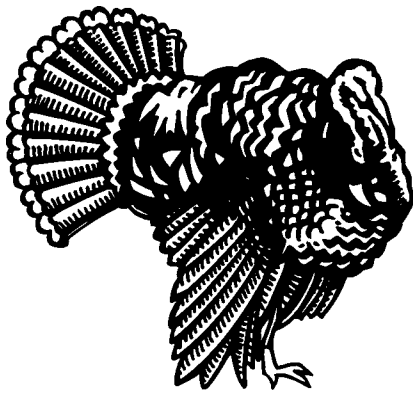
**Church
Women of
Comal County
At Faith UCC
Friday November 16th**

World Community Day is celebrated on or near the first Friday of November. This year’s theme is “*Embracing Justice Under God’s Tent.*” The logo depicts lady justice embracing the globe, providing a touch of comfort and solace to the earth’s inhabitants. This year’s meeting will be hosted by Faith UCC at 10:30 a.m. on November 16th.

The world today has more refugees than ever before. The causes are war, violence, boundary disputes, economics, technological disasters, and global climate change. Throughout history people have been displaced by similar circumstances. This worship service and study will focus on Biblical examples of displacement, homelessness and refugees – all helping to inform our faith and actions today.



- 11-2 Courtney Swander
- 11-4 Raymond Bizer
- 11-4 Betty Triesch
- 11-5 Denise Leonhardt
- 11-6 Marion Ammon
- 11-18 Darcy Peterson
- 11-19 Barbara Jaroszewski
- 11-22 Hunter Leber



Sunday November 18th is Thanksgiving Sunday!

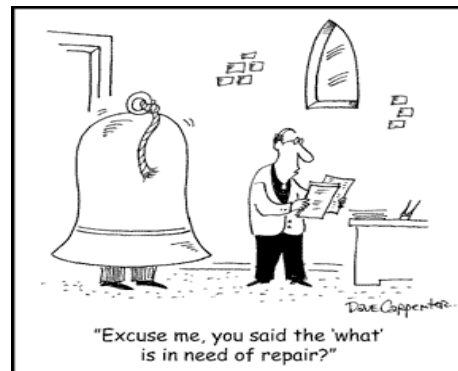
Begin your Thanksgiving week by attending our regular Sunday morning service at 10:30 on November 18th. This service will have a Thanksgiving theme.

We pray that each and every one of you will have a blessed Thanksgiving, surrounded by family and friends. We pray safe for journeys for all those who are on the road this holiday weekend. Don't forget to "count your blessings, name them one by one,...."

Disciples Church in Lewisville, Texas Hosts a Burmese Congregation

Debbie Chisolm is the pastor of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Lewisville, Texas. Not only is she proud to sponsor refugees fleeing Myanmar (Burma) and coming to build homes in Lewisville, but for the past two years her congregation has nested an American Baptist congregation from the state of Chin (in Burma) which averages 85 in worship. Unlike the Hispanic congregation they also nest, most (99%) of the Chins do not speak English, not even the children. Pastor Zam Mang, Pastor Martin Camacho, and herself meet every month to smooth over problems and just fellowship together. This past week Debbie contacted Global Ministries thinking how nice it would be if Disciples and UCC congregations could send cards and letters letting this Chin congregation know that we are praying for their friends and families in Myanmar. Send your cards and letters of support to:

**First Christian Church, Attn: Chin
Congregation, 880 Fox Ave,
Lewisville, Texas 75067** If you know of any other Burmese Congregations we could encourage in this way, please pass along that information to Global Ministries.



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Thanks to All Who Helped With The Garage Sale!

A great deal of hard work went into the garage sale this past month. There was the initial sorting and pricing, the setting up, handling the actual sales, and the taking down and packing the left-overs for Grace Mission in Luling. Our thanks to all of you who made it possible, especially to Karen Kramm for organizing it all!

We also owe a big debt of thanks to all of you who donated items for the sale. There would be no sale without things to sell! We had a large selection that made our sale a huge success.

Hopefully we all have a little bit more room in our closets, garages, attics and storage sheds!

The proceeds from the sale will go a long way to helping us seal and stripe our parking lot.



