

January 2017

Glimpses of Faith Newsletter

**Faith UCC
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New Braunfels, TX 78130**

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When I lived in Wichita, Kansas I would periodically drive south about a hour to the Chaplin Nature Preserve, an Audubon Nature preserve. There were a number of trails through the preserve's 230 acres on the Arkansas River. I would walk the trails, listen to the birds, walk along the sandy banks of the river and spend a couple of hours absorbing the tranquility of this place. A wild orange tree grew near the trail head. I would wonder how it got there and how it survived year after year in the cold Kansas winters.. Every time I left this beautiful place I felt renewed and refreshed.



I ran across this beautiful poem by Wendel Berry recently:

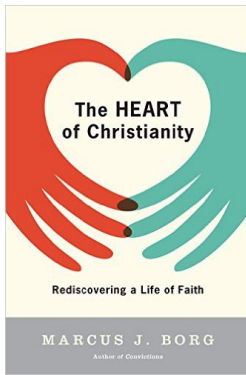
**When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.**

One of my goals in the new year is to go in search of such a place near here. If you know such a place let me know. Even without access to such a place we can spend time in places like Landa Park, Slumber Falls Camp, or even our own back yards. Even watching nature programs on TV can offer something of the "peace of wild things".

The World is in great need of this "peace of wild things". It can help humans be more human and recognize the reality that we are part of the web of life on this planet. It can strengthen our resolve to do our part to protect God's creation. Even our largest urban areas recognize the importance of building in at least some "green space". What would New York City be without Central Park? What would London be without places like Hyde Park? What would Montreal be without Mount Royal Park?

Here's hoping you too can find the "peace of wild things" in the New Year 2017.

Happy New Year Everyone!



Book Study: Part II Begins on Tuesday, January 10th

The **"Heart of Christianity"**, book study group will resume on, **Tuesday Jan 10th at 6:30PM** in Basie Hall, to complete the second half of its exploring the book by the late Marcus Borg. Ralph Ludwig will have the *group study book* reading assignments at our worship on Jan 1 and 8th. He will ensure that all will group members will get them, even if they are not in church on Jan. 1st Members are asked to read Chapter 6 before our first meeting.

Christmas VBS

Thank you to everyone who helped with Christmas VBS. Eighteen children enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of food, fellowship, music, art, decorating Christmas cookies, and generally having a fabulous time. Thanks to the bakers and the helpers and the music makers. It was a great success and Christmas JOY!



New Braunfels Annual March

"Honoring the Work and Legacy"
of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. January 16, 2017



The march begins at Prince Solms Park at 10:00 AM corner of South Liberty Ave. and San Antonio St. and will end at the New Braunfels Civic Convention Center with a ceremony of civil tribute and musical selections to commemorate the day!

New Braunfels MLK Association, Inc./P.O. Box 31533 NB, TX 78131

Come out and join march! For more information: Henry Ford (830)214-4358

January Birthdays

1-5 Bill Burns

1-19 Julia Allison

1-21 Sharon Zillmann

1-21 David Myer

1-22 Bonnie Stark

1-26 Darlene Stephens

1-26 Bennie Harst

1-29 Kelcey Kramm

Update on Karnes

Thank you all for your prayers and presence with Art Inside Karnes during 2016. Unfortunately, ICE has rescinded the security clearance for Pastora Helena, Pastora Sabrina, and Sister Denise. Effective Dec. 15, 2016 the art ministry has been shut down. Each volunteer chaplain received a brief telephone conversation from the GEO rep as notice of their termination. Helen has subsequently let GEO know that she has never spoken poorly of GEO, Karnes, or the staff there, and, in fact, assured GEO that all three volunteers have spoken up on behalf of the staff on numerous occasions. It has been devastating for all concerned—inside and outside of Karnes.

A bit of background: ICE (AKA Homeland Security) required fingerprinting for Helen and Sabrina. Sabrina hadn't had the opportunity to do hers, but Helen had it done right away at the assigned time and location. The required fingerprinting also included an FBI background check whereby they went through Helen's Facebook, art blog, and academic website. For Helen, who has never even had a parking ticket, ICE objected to her academic papers which were included as teaching videos on her academic website. ICE immediately had GEO contact all three pastoral volunteers to rescind their security clearance and to shut down the art program. The papers were written for her academic peers, and they do not name Karnes or GEO, nor do they say anything negative about family detention. However, each paper concluded with a call to action for the Church to speak out and to change the unjust treatment of the women and children in the so-called "dog kennel" and "refrigerator" where the U.S. Border Patrol incarcerates them prior to dissemination to Karnes or Dilley. The video lecture included photos of these facilities which are available online through Google Images by surfing "U.S. Border Patrol Facilities Texas."



Many people have asked "what will happen to the women and children now?" and that is a question without an immediate answer. Despite the headline news in mid-December when ICE released 500 women and children over a 4-day period, both facilities continue to receive new immigrants seeking asylum and it is very much "business as usual." Of course, the change in the U.S. Administration during January brings much insecurity and uncertainty. Please keep all concerned in your prayers, particularly in the following three areas:

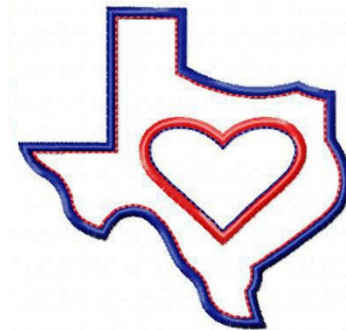
1. There is uncertainty about what (else) ICE might do regarding what they see as insubordination and Helen "using" Karnes to argue her thesis and also possible consequences to GEO staff which ICE might deem "culpable."
2. Discernment for how(ever) Helen might continue to be in ministry in some context (on the outside of the detention center walls) to be a blessing to immigrants seeking asylum.
3. Peace through the sadness for all three women in ministry as they have been torn from the women and children and GEO staff whom we love very much.

So far, Sister Denise has been allowed to continue her ministry inside the other family detention facility at Dilley. For everyone else, there are many other opportunities for helping on the "outside," including volunteering at Casa de RAICES in downtown San Antonio (Helen went there Dec. 21st instead of doing Las Posadas and VBS inside Karnes). There also are opportunities to help with the backpack ministry (which received all the treat bags the Faith VBS kids had packaged up) and the bus station ministry. Advocacy through education is another excellent way to help. Helen has taken the video lecture off of her academic website during a season of discernment as she listens to how/where/what God is leading her to do. Your prayers are greatly appreciated.

Heart of Texas Association News

In early December, I attended a meeting called AM21 in San Antonio for UCC people from all over the US who work with Committees on Ministry. "AM 21" stands for **Authorizing Ministry in the 21st century**. This particular gathering dealt with the first revision of our Manual on Ministry since about the year 2000. Although many of you may not even be aware of the Manual, it is very important to all of our churches, ministers, and Members in Discernment (formerly students in care), and indeed to the ministry we all share. That's why I am writing about what the Manual on Ministry is and the process of revising it, which has involved a group of volunteers recruited from across the UCC. The final version will not be adopted until a substantial period of soliciting comments and revisions, again from across the UCC, is completed.

Some of the most important work our Association does is that of our Committee on Ministry or the COM (formerly the Church and Ministry Committee). This Committee oversees our Authorized Ministers -- ordained, licensed, and commissioned. The COM also oversees our Members in Discernment on their paths to Authorized Ministry. In our case, that involves our licensed and ordained ministers -- we have no active commissioned ministers, a large (for our small Association) and active group of licensed ministers, our Members in Discernment, and, of course, our ordained ministers. We use our UCC Manual on Ministry constantly in this process to give orderly and clear guidance, constructed with the long experience of similar committees across the denomination and of the national UCC people who work with them. We do not necessarily use it as a strict rule book, but we adhere closely to almost all of the processes it recommends.



Amazingly, the draft of this revision is much shorter than the previous version! Does this ever happen? The proposed version is much simpler to read. Certain complex processes, such as how to work with chaplains to get professional certification, are handled with other resources. There are a few major changes proposed. For example, the UCC General Synod several years ago adopted a resolution **allowing for people to prepare for ordained ministry in alternative ways to pursuing a Master of Divinity degree**, but the guidance for how to do that has been lacking. Also, the church and our understanding of its work has been changing, **but our guidance about ordination has been somewhat limited to an assumption of a call to full time parish ministry**. This draft Manual addresses these changes in a thoughtful way. The people who were part of this meeting gave substantial feedback on what has been proposed. Our Committee on Ministry will be asked to do the same, and I anticipate we will be sharing that with the wider Association at our next meeting. I hope many of you can be part of this process of seeking to make our ministry more faithful to what God is calling us to do and be.

Blessings in Christ,

Liz Nash, Heart of Texas Association Minister

January Worship Assistants List

1-1-17 Liturgist: Nicolle Clark Acolyte: Cade Perry Council Rep:
Greeter: Michelle Perry Communion: Kathy Leber Hospitality: Shirley Manning
Ushers: Michelle & Nicolle Perry- Clark; AV: Joe Ward
Nursery: TBA Church School: (on break)

1-8-17 Liturgist: Karen Dietz Acolyte: Fisher Marlow Council Rep: Dan Geisler
Greeter: Frank Dietz Hospitality: Jan Ziegler AV: Eddie Martinez
Ushers: Dan Geisler; Frank & Karen Dietz; Mike Ziegler
Nursery: TBA Church School: TBA

1-15-17 Liturgist: Jennifer Marlow Acolyte: Fischer Marlow Council Rep: Kim Beauchamp
Greeter: David Bizer AV: Tim Marlow Hospitality:
Ushers: Kim Beauchamp; Jakob Beauchamp; David Bizer; Jennifer Marlow
Nursery: TBA Church School TBA

1-22-17 Liturgist: Wil Brown Acolyte: Sofia Beauchamp Council Rep: Joseph Guerrero
Greeter: Wil Brown Hospitality: Karen Dietz AV: Jakob Beauchamp
Ushers: Joseph Guerrero; Wil Brown; Richard Leber; TBA
Nursery: TBA Church School: TBA

1-29-17 Liturgist: Donna Myer Acolyte: Ava Perry Council Rep: Mikki Ward
Greeter: Joe Ward Hospitality: Vicky Geisler AV: Joe Ward
Ushers: Mikki Ward; Dan & Vicky Geisler; Jim Gossett
Nursery: TBA Church School TBA

2-5-17 Liturgist: Joseph Guerrero Acolyte: Ava Perry Council Rep: Kyle Kramm
Greeter: Nicolle Clark Hospitality: Julia Allison AV: Michelle Perry
Ushers: Kyle Kramm; Nicolle Clark; Quinn Perry;
Joseph Guerrero
Nursery: TBA Church School: TBA

If you cannot serve on the date(s) shown, please try to find a sub. If that is not possible, please leave a message at the church (830-625-6761) as soon as possible. If you would like to be added or removed from all or part of the Worship Assistant List, please contact the church office.



Friedens UCC in Geronimo will have a Fish Fry on Friday January 20th beginning at 5 p.m. Fried fish, hush puppies, french fries, and slaw for \$10.

Our thanks to everyone who helped with ringing the bells for Salvation Army at Belks!

Our thanks to Helen Boursier for organizing the Christmas VBS and all the other adults who helped and to the children and youth who came. Thanks for the great Christmas program on Sunday morning!



Thanks From Pastor Scott

I would like to thank EVERYONE again for all of your prayers, cards, memorial gifts, loving presence in the weeks following my mother's passing. I especially want to thank the church and individuals responsible for organizing and providing the reception after my mother's memorial. A special thanks to Rev. Frank Deitz for conducting the memorial service. It is a blessing to be part of such a loving faith family!



Thanks to contributions to my mother's memorial fund to date we have been able to add \$1,315 to our Faith Church Kiva Fund! This increased the fund by 25%. I was even able to find one loan that was for a woman named Elizabeth. It is nice to know these funds will continue to multiply in the lives of people all around the world in the months and years to come.

Let me continue my thanks by thanking you all for your Christmas cards, gifts, well wishes, and the Amazon gift card from the church! It is a privilege to be pastor here at Faith UCC!

Wishing the church and all of you a Blessed and Happy New Year in 2017!

**Faith UCC Annual Meeting on Sunday
January 29th after church.**