



# THE CHIMES

## IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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July 2016

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### *“Reflections”*

Have you ever thought about what summer months are supposed to do for us? Help us rest and revitalize at home or away at a place that makes us feel good. Summer is supposed to help us have an extended Sabbath time. When I was a kid, the exhilaration of newly acquired freedom would wear off and boredom would settle in after a few weeks. Now, as an aging adult with retirement a not so distant reality, my concept of “summer Sabbath” is changing. For me, the church never stops.

So, here’s the question for the month of July. Why are you here on Sundays? And if you aren’t around on a steady basis (remembering that you do get some but not all time off for good behavior from June – August), why not? What’s creating worship avoidance? Let me give you something to think about. Then you can let me know your response. Really...tell me...

The Rev. Molly Baskette is a pastor in the United Church of Christ. She does a lot of writing, including publishing one book and being one of the authors of the “Daily Devotional”, a daily email received through the UCC website. Now she finds herself in an in-between place: she’s accepted a new call, but it isn’t time to begin there, and she’s already left her old church. Rev. Baskette decided that she needed a few months off between calls to complete some obligations she had taken on prior to the change in churches.

In a Daily Devotional written on April 12, 2016, she writes about what it’s like in this “in-between” place. I think her experiences are helpful as you answer the “why not” question. She writes that it’s great to be able to sleep in on Sunday mornings; to not wake up in a panic that perhaps her sermon isn’t finished; to not have to “fight my teenager to get out of bed and get dressed to be on time for worship.” She thinks her “unstructured time” is a gift.

But Molly also says that there is a problem with unstructured time: she’s noticed that she’s becoming more self-centered and more irritated at the little annoyances of everyday life. It turns out, she says, that “I need the structure of religious community to be a better person. It’s not that I’m a hypocrite, pretending to be better than I am when I am in my role – I am actually a better person when I have the full weight and positive inertia of other Christians also trying to be better people around me. Church is the scaffolding around the weak structure of my character.”

- Continued -

What is Immanuel to you? A place with snacks and good music? A demand on your time? A thing you used to do because it was expected? Let me give you some other descriptive ways to think about your church and see if they work for you:

1. Immanuel is the group of people in my life who help me learn more about God.
2. Immanuel gives me a place and time to have a personal close encounter of the divine kind that challenges me to stretch, grow, and “go.”
3. Immanuel means that I have a really diverse community of people who love God, love me, and want to love the world in meaningful, transformative ways together.
4. I never know what I might learn or feel when I attend worship with my friends at Immanuel.
5. Something in me changes when I give God that time, at that place, with the people who mean a lot to me.

Yes, it is summer. Yes, you can go on vacation! But in the meantime, nothing in the world is staying still. In a matter of days we’ve gone from Orlando, to fires and floods, terrorism, more questionable police shootings and subsequent deaths of black men, the slaughter of five policemen in Dallas, and our vandalism.

People come to church for all kinds of reasons. If you’re missing, we’re incomplete. If you’re missing, the weight of the world isn’t going to get lighter. Besides, it just doesn’t feel the same without you! And I’m sure God would like to hear from you too.

Peace...

Rev Bev

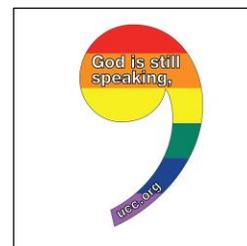
P.S. In September we’re going to tackle the Book of Revelation with Bruce Metzger’s book, “Breaking the Code,” in the Global Café Bible Study. If you’re interested in joining the group for these sessions, please let Jill know at the office. We’ll be placing an order for the books as soon as we come up with a discount price from one of our sources.

P.S. #2 Thank you for all of your cards and expressions of support during my days and nights of dogless grief.

## Upcoming Events

Sunday, August 14 Consistory Meeting

Global Café Bible Study will reconvene in September with the Book of Revelation.



### July Birthdays

01 – Helen Carrick

02 – P.J. DiPaula

05 – Hope Miller

13 – Phil Shockley

15 – Lyla Pfefferkorn

17 – Ken Hudson

21 – Alex Schreiner

22 – Isabelle de Mozenette

24 – Alan Pfefferkorn

29 – Rachel Welsh

31 – Sarah Kramer



# UCC offering assistance to West Virginia flood victims

June 29, 2016 Written by **Connie Larkman**

United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries is looking for assistance to help the people in West Virginia recover from historic floods. Thousands are facing a prolonged cleanup effort following deadly and devastating storms that swamped much of the state last week, and the UCC will be there to help long-term.

"We will be working closely with the Ohio Conference, West Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and other organizations to help coordinate and support the long-term recovery efforts, and will need funds and volunteers to support that work in upcoming months," said Zach Wolgemuth, UCC Disaster Ministries executive.

Thousands have been left homeless due to the widespread floodwaters, dumped by a series of storms on Thursday, June 23. Twenty-three people have died in the disaster, the nation's highest death toll from flash floods since May 2010, when 27 people died in Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi.

The UCC Ohio Conference is already delivering 600 cleanup kits and 300 hygiene kits to the area, and has requested additional kits from Church World Service. Wolgemuth stresses that while the UCC is not engaged in the actual clean-up work, Disaster Ministries stands ready to provide funding to fill unmet needs and gaps in services.

"While UCC Disaster Ministries focus is on long-term recovery, we keep a close eye on early response work and provide financial support to groups and organizations experiencing gaps," Wolgemuth said.

Torrential downpours, which brought as much as 10 inches of rain, wiped out entire areas of the West Virginia countryside, sweeping away homes and flooding structures, washing away roads and cutting off power to thousands. The National Weather Service called it a '1-in-1,000 year event,' and President Obama has declared the state a disaster area.

Financial assistance should be directed to the UCC [Emergency USA Fund](#), and future opportunities to volunteer can be found on the [Disaster Ministries website](#).



Larkman, Connie. "UCC offering assistance to West Virginia flood victims." [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org). 29 June 2016. [http://www.ucc.org/news\\_ucc\\_offering\\_assistance\\_west\\_virginia\\_flood\\_victims\\_06292016](http://www.ucc.org/news_ucc_offering_assistance_west_virginia_flood_victims_06292016)



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### **Lectionary Readings**

(Day-Date; First Reading; Psalm; Second Reading; Gospel)

#### **Seventh Sunday after Pentecost – July 3, 2016**

2 Kings 5:1-14, Psalm 30 or Isaiah 66:10-14, Psalm 66:1-9; Galatians 6:(1-6), 7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

#### **Eighth Sunday after Pentecost – July 10, 2016**

Amos 7:7-17, Psalm 82 or Deuteronomy 30:9-14, Psalm 25:1-10; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

#### **Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – July 17, 2016**

Amos 8:1-12, Psalm 52 or Genesis 18:1-10a, Psalm 15; Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

#### **Tenth Sunday after Pentecost – July 24, 2016**

Hosea 1:2-10, Psalm 85 or Genesis 18:20-32, Psalm 138; Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19); Luke 11:1-13

#### **Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost – July 31, 2016**

Hosea 11:1-11, Psalm 107:1-9, 43 or Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23, Psalm 49:1-12; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

## Prayer Concerns

### PRAYER CONCERNS IN THE CHURCH FAMILY:

Libby Walter, physical therapy and recovery from her fall; Pray for our church as we work to restore our building. Steve Schreiner's son, Alex, PTSD from his car accident.

### PRAYER CONCERNS IN OUR REGION:

West Virginia flood victims; Let us pray for restorative justice across Baltimore and the U.S.; Families impacted by gun violence.

### NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS:

Loss of family members in Minnesota and Louisiana police shootings; Dallas police; Safety of all protesters and heightened security measures for law enforcement personnel; Firefighters across the western states; The LGBTQ community of Orlando and across the U.S.; First responders across the nation; Trauma center personnel; Flood and storm victims across the U.S.; Refugees across the world; People of Fallujah, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria; U.S. military deployed and stateside.