

United Church of Christ Professional Chaplains and Counselors



December 2007

Volume 8, Issue 2

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Rev. Dr. Martha R. Jacobs, President
The HealthCare Chaplaincy
307 East 60th Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 644-1111, ext 215
mjacobs@healthcarechaplaincy.org

Rev. Dorothy Shelly BCC, RN, Vice
President
Phoebe Richland Health Care Center
108 South Main St.
Richlandtown, PA 18955
267-371-4580
dshelly@phoebe.org

Rev. Corrrine Dautrich, Secretary/
Treasurer
Phoebe Home
1925 Turner St.
Allentown, PA 18104
610-794-5116
cdautrich@phoebe.org

Rev. Kathleen Ennis-Durstine
Newsletter Editor/Member Services
Senior Chaplain
Manager: Office of InterFaith
Pastoral and Spiritual Care
Children's Hospital
111 Michigan Ave., NW
Washington, DC, 20010
202-884-3321/fax: 202-884-3076
kennisdu@cnmc.org



A Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

As Dorothy Shelly says in her column to you, it is hard to believe it is already Advent! It has been a very full and rich fall. Starting with the first ever UCC/PCC retreat at the Church House, we found ourselves getting to know the National Staff better and talked with them about our concerns as ministers in specialized settings. Rev. John Thomas, our UCC President, provided us with a wonderful sermon which you will find on our website. He gave us a new way to think about the road to Emmaus, that road that we walk every day with patients, family and staff. The leadership let us know that they truly do value our ministry to the UCC as chaplains and counselors.

I did something just after Thanksgiving that I have never before done in my 16 years of doing ministry. I did a week-long silent retreat. I did not respond to e-mails—didn't even take my computer with me, nor did I use my cell phone! I did not speak, except during the 45 minute daily session with a spiritual director. Without a doubt, this was THE most important week in my years of ministry because it enabled me to grieve the losses I have witnessed as a chaplain over all these years (ones I thought I had already grieved), it enabled me to draw closer to God in new and startlingly wonderful and powerful ways, and it enabled me to begin a new relationship with Jesus, whose human side I had not taken the time to get to "know." And, for the first time, I contemplated what God wanted FOR me, as opposed to how God wanted me to serve God. I urge you, if you have not given yourself this kind of opportunity, to give yourself this gift—a time of silent retreat, where you can get to know God, Jesus and yourself better.

As we get ready for our Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh, I encourage you to sign up for the breakfast AND I encourage you to attend it!!! We pay if you sign up and don't show up!!! So, please help us be good stewards of our money. Oh, and speaking of money, 2008 Dues are due by the end of January. You will find the form on our website. And if you have \$5-10 extra to throw in, please do so that we can continue to grow our funds and grow our services to you!

May this time of waiting be special for each of you.

Blessings and Shalom,

Martha Jacobs, President

From Our Vice President

Dear UCC/PCC Colleagues,

First of all, it is a privilege to serve our Association in the capacity as vice-president. Second, I am proud of the work that has been done previously by Rozann Shackleton who so ably served until the time of our LinK event/retreat at the Church House in Cleveland which 42 of us attended. That time was a great opportunity to share, learn, and grow both professionally and spiritually. I left feeling that the Spirit is indeed alive within us as individuals in specialized ministries as well as with us as an organization within our denomination. I have greatly appreciated Rozann's mentorship and suspect it will be some time before I remove her number from my cell phone. Realizing I do have a tough act to follow, I am feeling blessed to be working with Martha Jacobs.

Nonetheless, if you are like me, you are saying, "It can't be December already! Advent already?" As is my late fall gardening ritual, I have added to the massive bed of King Alfred bulbs along the front porch. Not being a winter person, seeing their first green shoots mysteriously appear couldn't come too soon. I have also taken my last of the year soul-refreshing get-away to the Weston Priory in southern Vermont. The birches have lost their golden leaves and stand naked among the pines of the Green Mountains. They seem to be patiently awaiting spring's warmth. Time has a way of quickly moving ahead, whether or not we are ready.

Before we know it, the APC annual conference at the Westin Convention Center, Pittsburgh (March 8-12) will be upon us. When registering, please sign up for our UCC/PCC breakfast on Sunday, March 9. That time together in the past has always been informative as well as a good fellowship time.

May we, in our hearts, truly know the peace of this Advent and Christmas season.



Blessings,
Dorothy Shelly

BUDGET (year-to-date as of 11/27/07)

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Beginning balance	\$606	Postage	\$592
2007/2008 Dues	\$4,325	Website	\$149
Donations	\$1,980	General Synod	\$1,275
Annual Meeting Subsidy	\$800	Leadership Retreat	\$343
CHHSM Subsidy	\$4,131	CHHSM Meeting	\$369
General Synod Donations	\$1,024	UCC/PCC Annual Meeting	\$5,764
Total Revenue	\$12,866	Total Disbursements	\$8,492
		Checking Account Balance	\$4,374

Corrine Dautrich, Treasurer

Julius Varwig Award

This award is presented to a United Church of Christ Professional Chaplain or Counselor who has demonstrated dedication and commitment to serve persons in the name of Jesus Christ and in the spirit exemplified by the first full-time Protestant chaplain in the United States, Rev. Julius W. Varwig.

Download [Varwig 2008 nomination form](#).

The award is named for the father of the modern chaplaincy movement. During the late 1800s, Julius Varwig was instrumental in serving people in need regardless of religious affiliation rather than the conventional practice of presiding over a church-affiliated congregation.

The Rev. Julius W. Varwig first served as an aide in the internationally acclaimed Bethel am Bielefeld Institution in Germany caring for epileptic and mentally deficient patients. He then studied at the Berlin-based Johannes-Stift before coming to the United States where he concluded his theological training at Eden Theological Seminary in 1898.

After spending a quarter of a century in the pastoral ministry during which time he faithfully visited persons under care whether they were members of his congregation or not, he resigned from his position as pastor of a very active congregation. Without a basis of support, the Rev. Varwig committed himself to full-time service as a hospital mission chaplain serving primarily under care in public institutions in the metropolitan St. Louis area. In doing so, he is the first known Protestant pastor in the United States to limit his primary ministry to public health care institutions.

When Chaplain Varwig made his decision to limit his pastoral services to a chaplaincy ministry, he and his family prayerfully risked everything in the faith that God had called him to this service to the poor and to the "strangers" within society. Many were the moments that his faith was tested and, in time, his unique chaplaincy ministry was recognized by the church and the community as well. It was, in part, from such a humble response to God's call that the modern chaplaincy movement to serve persons under care had its beginning.

Written by the Rev. Carl C. Rasche St Louis, Missouri

Submissions for the Award are due by December 15, 2007

UCCPCC Membership Time

Membership is open to all chaplains and counselors with standing in the UCC. Download [UCC-PCC Application June 07](#) form at <http://www.uccchaplains.org>

Annual membership dues are \$30.00. Download [Dues renewal](#) <http://www.uccchaplains.org>

Retired and student chaplains dues are \$15.00.

All dues should be mailed to CHHSM at 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115.

Dues are payable no later than January 31, 2008

In Celebration of LINK—Thanks

I want to sincerely thank the organizers and sponsors of the LINK conference last September. I found it to be very welcoming, informative, inclusive, collegial and relevant. It has provided valuable networking among UCC Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors, and also brought good memories of my first CPE residency in Dayton, OH, having just arrived from the Philippines. I loved the services and the circular atmosphere at the Amistad Chapel. I'm so proud of our national leaders and what the UCC is doing in promoting social justice and spirituality both here and abroad.

All the best,

*Rev. Noel Tiano, ThD, BCC
Reno, Nevada*

Thanks, Tony

Wednesday again. . . It's Wednesday again,
Program day in the Alzheimer's unit.
Would I keep their attention today?
Would I even capture their attention?
My olive wood statues of those three gift-bearing Wise Men
Just might help resurrect and re-discover
The old, old Epiphany story.

Sitting in silence until the scent of frankincense and myrrh,
Oil of anointing touched to the forehead.
Transported back by memories of childhood,
Tony in his mind, was at Christmas Eve midnight mass.

Just a small parish, near the Duna River
A little village in Hungary.
Hand in hand with mother,
Standing in the bitter cold,
Hoping to get a seat when inside.
(Everyone went this night to pay homage.)

His sharing came not without tears.
Those memories of former days
When he too would later depart another way. . .

Searching diligently for God in that Russian camp. . .four long years.

Another Wednesday. . .
Another glimpse of an epiphany.

Thanks, Tony,
Thanks



Dorothy Shelly is the Vice President of UCCPCC. This poem is taken from her book “Anybody See My Shoes? Poetic Reflections From a Chaplain” She has been doing long term care with Phoebe Ministries since 1996.

Breaking Out To Do God's Work

Jessica Petersen, Minister for Christian Education at Westmoreland UCC, Bethesda, Maryland; Candidate for Ordination. Clinical Pastoral Education student at Children's

After finishing my lunch, I sat at the computer searching for possible topics for a session of theological reflection that I was to lead a couple of days later. I was very comfortable sitting in the cramped office that I shared with my fellow learners in our CPE program. I felt the smooth plastic keys beneath my fingers and basked in the warm glow of the computer screen. I felt at home. This was something I knew how to do. I was much more comfortable sitting here in this small office surrounded by computers and books than I was roaming the halls of the hospital searching for a patient to visit. The moments when I was to stand in front of a new patient's door and raise my fist to knock had been my most dreaded moments during my entire CPE experience. So, I sat there at the computer and did what I knew how to do.

But, I knew I could not do this forever. I began to think about how I was neglecting the children and families who were most definitely deserving of having someone reach out to them while they were experiencing being in this children's hospital. I had to go out. I had to face my fear because these children and their families deserved no less. I believe that everyone is loved by God and is important and that they should be shown that this is so. I could no longer sit hidden away in that small office not helping to reveal this reality. I had to break out of my comfort zone in order to extend comfort and care to others.

I headed upstairs to the Neurology/Orthopedics unit and knocked on the first door I saw. As soon as I had introduced myself to the young girl in the room, a child life specialist came in and invited her to feed the fish. "Maybe I should just go," I thought to myself. But, the girl's mother seemed to want me to stay, so I walked with the group to the fish tank on the other side of the unit.

I observed Mom as she followed her daughter carefully reacting to her every move. The young girl had just had surgery on her spine and was practicing how to walk without disrupting any of the work the surgeon had done. Mom was very anxious. After the fish were fed and the young girl had successfully returned to her bed, I began to talk with Mom.

She began to tell me why they were here and tears began to well up in her eyes. We left the young girl and her friends so that we could talk, and the tears began to flow. Mom was very worried about her daughter and bringing her home. She was worried that her daughter would be discharged and she would not be prepared to care for her. In addition to caring for her daughter, she was also going to be caring for her mother who would be having surgery in a couple of days. And, this was only the first of six surgeries that her daughter would have to undergo. This mother cried as she said, "This is the first time I have cried since we have been here. I couldn't do it before. I had to be strong. I didn't want my daughter to see my like this." "It is ok to cry," I assured her. Shortly after, we returned to her daughter's bedside. I said my good-byes and asked if they would like for me to visit again to which they responded, yes.

I walked out of that room having learned a valuable lesson. I learned experientially that the chaplain's role is a very important and necessary role. Had I not risked knocking on that door, would this mother still be holding in her tears? With whom would she have discussed her fears? Who would have empowered her to ask questions of the doctors and physical therapists so that she could feel comfortable taking her daughter home? Seeing how valuable this visit was for this mother made it much easier for me to extend my fist and knock and really taught me how invaluable the work of the chaplain is.

NEW MEMBERS . . .

Rev. Ronald Ballew is the Director of Chaplaincy at Select Specialty Medical Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is a member of the Southeast Association of the Wisconsin Conference. He was graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary; Ronald was ordained to the ministry of the United Church of Christ in 1992. He has a particular interest in Conflict Resolution work.

Rev. Emily S. Castner received her M.Div. degree from Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts. She was ordained by the United Church of Christ in September of 2007. She serves as Chaplain at Monroe Community Hospital in Rochester, New York and is a member of the Genesee Valley Association of the New York Conference. Emily also holds a Ph.D. degree in zoology from Duke University.

Rev. Joan Finck has been serving as a Sunday Supply minister and Hospice Chaplain in the Massapequa, New York area where she is a member of the Suffolk Association of the New York Conference. She received her theological education (M. Div.) at New York Theological Seminary. Joan was ordained by the United Church of Christ in November of 2002. She has a special interest in the issues of clergy taxation and has been trained as a member of a group in New York state that assists local churches/individuals when clergy become abusers.

Rev. Susan E. Gregory-Davis received her M.Div. for Yale Divinity School in 1987 and was ordained in the United Church of Christ in October of 1989. She is a Protestant Chaplain at the VA Medical Center, White River Junction, Vermont. She is also a relief Chaplain at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire and a co-pastor at Meriden Congregational Church in Meriden, New Hampshire. She is a member of the Sullivan Association of the New Hampshire Conference. Spiritual Direction is her special interest.

Mary Etta Mest is a student in-care of the East Berks Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. She is a Clinical Pastoral Education student at Phoebe Ministries in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Mary received her M. Div. degree from Palmer Theological Seminary in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. Her special interests are in music and writing.

Rev. Jennifer S. (Geffen) Okin-Larkin is a member of St. Paul UCC in Corpus Christi, Texas, South Central UCC Conference. She is a student of Tripp Bible Institute and will receive her Associate Degree in Chaplaincy in 2008. She has been ordained by Universal Ministries of Milford, Illinois as a Wedding/Commitment Officiant.

Rev. Enid L. Ross is a Staff Chaplain at Brackenridge Hospital, part of the Seton Health Care Network, in Austin, Texas. She received her M. Div. degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. The United Church of Christ ordained her in October of 2002. Areas of special interest for Enid are homelessness and addiction.



***May this
season be
Holy and
Bright for you
in all ways.***