

ONE CHURCH

A faith formation conference on intergenerational worship — with children in leadership positions. Another on integrating people of all abilities into worship. UCC members working with global



partners to change lives. Ministers discerning calls. Chaplains finding tools they need for effective ministry. UCC national staff

and local pastors contributing to unfair marriage laws being overturned, preventing ministers from being jailed for performing marriage rites.

In ways large and small, Our Church's Wider Mission provides the support and resources needed for UCC ministries.

More than ever, our world needs the hopeful message of the Stillspeaking God. Gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission ensure that the extravagant welcome and justice and witness ministries of our church reach people throughout the world.

Contributions to OCWM help change lives as, together, we work toward the day when, as John says, we "may all be one."

JUSTICE IMMERSION CENTERS

God's grace and generosity call us to be courageous advocates for justice and peace. We are inspired by scripture, the foundation of our justice faith formation that comes to life when we study issues, organize with communities, build networks, and advocate for just public policies. The UCC's justice immersion centers provide transformational experiences that move participants to create social and spiritual change. The first life that we change is our own. We are then compelled to be human channels of God's grace and peace in the world made real through the teachings and example of Christ Jesus.



Franklinton Center at Bricks in Whitakers, N.C., in the heart of a food desert, reveals the tragedies of racism and poverty lingering

in the South; the Pilgrim Firs Center located in northwest Washington state trains justice leaders to help churches and communities change their environmental impact; additional trainings are scheduled in various places across the country. The UCC's Washington, D.C., office provides skills training and direct action by meeting with elected leaders on issues of national and international policy. Together we are listening for the Stillspeaking God. Together we are changing lives!

YOUNG ADULTS IN MISSION



"I am still uncovering the ways in which the past year as a YAScEr [member of the UCC's network of Young Adult Service Communities in UCC churches] has

changed me," writes Andrew Keller a few months after completing service with Pilgrim UCC in Carlsbad, Calif., and beginning graduate school. Andrew and others serving in the Young Adult Service Communities and Summer Communities of Service experience vital congregations that blur boundaries between congregational life and the wider community. Young adults hone leadership skills for this life-giving mission that is church in the 21st century.

Another program for young adults in mission bridges "local" and "global" by serving a global partner, followed by service in the United States with people in similar life situations.

Julianna Nitz, serving in Jaffna, Sri Lanka affirms, "My heart has been broken with loss, and my heart has been bursting with joy. I have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, walked with the stranger and loved the orphan. I have taught so many and yet been taught by many more." God's mission changes lives.

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**
700 Prospect Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44115



OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION

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OF CHRIST**



WHAT IS OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION?



Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) funds the work we do in the Associations, Conferences and in the national and global church. OCWM funds are

invested in programs, resources, and tools needed to keep local UCC churches strong, effective, and growing.

OCWM helps provide pastoral placement and education for church leaders; worship materials and theological interpretation; resources and training for stewardship and fundraising; and so much more. We are one church—a united and uniting church. We are the United Church of Christ.

The ministry projects you'll read about in this brochure reflect the UCC's core values of continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives. Our call is to tell the good news of the Stillspeaking God so that all who seek the healing love of Jesus Christ can hear.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

LEADERSHIP

The UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization Ministry Team (MESA) is designed to support Authorized Ministers (Ordained, Licensed and Commissioned) in our denomination from the first inklings of their calling through a healthy retirement. MESA's ministry is a collaborative effort intertwined with Conferences, Associations, and Committees on Ministry.

When a person is moved to exploration of a potential call to ministry, they become a Member in Discernment and the MESA ministry team provides the guidelines and procedures for their formation. Conference Committees on Ministry mentor Members in Discernment. When that individual is authorized and called into service as a pastor of a local church, MESA is there to provide support for continuing education and oversight.

If that pastor feels drawn to explore a new ministry setting, MESA supports the search and call process of the denomination, and offers support to ministers serving in specialized settings such as hospital and college chaplaincy.

This holy work is never completed in isolation. It is dependent on God's presence moving through the church and calling forth leaders. Together we work across the church to form, equip and support faithful and effective authorized ministers for God's mission in the world.

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

Congregational Vitality is found in hope-filled worship, nurturing faith, extravagant welcome, and visionary leadership. It is also found in bold local and global witness, inspiring generosity and life together in Christian partnership. We listen for God's still speaking voice in community, "turning our work into worship and our worship into work." We are transformed together.

UCC congregations are nourished by many resources provided by the UCC's Congregational Vitality Ministry. Whether it's a call to ministry, lay and pastoral leadership training through the Center for Progressive Renewal, funding new and renewing churches, or providing scholarly



reflections for pastors found in Sermon Seeds, we serve to strengthen churches and leaders. Weekly Seeds bible studies, materials found in Worship Ways, and musical selections from *Sing, Prayer and Praise* or *The New Century Hymnal* guide us toward praise and thanksgiving.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

"My 16-year-old son has never really been that into church, but after National Youth Event (NYE), he said he wants to learn more about youth at General Synod..." a mother shares with joyful amazement. This is only one of a host of testimonies shared by parents, guardians, youth group leaders, pastors, and conference ministers who witness a transformative change in their youth after attending NYE.



The UCC's Ministry for Youth is committed to leadership, spiritual formation, justice, service, and youth advocacy, and provides resources for

events like the National Youth Event and General Synod. Youth Ministry is made possible year-round through UCC regional- and conference-based gatherings and through partnerships with our UCC camps and centers across the country.

We only need to tune into our youth to hear a Stillspeaking God. Our youth are the future today — right now.