



Resource Center for Churches

Resources for the Journey

Contact us: www.resourcesforthejourney.org

Volume 11 Number 1

March 2009

New Audio Book:

“The Desert Mothers; Spiritual Practices from the Women in the Wilderness,” unabridged, read by author, Mary C. Earle. 3 CDs.

Reminder: We have “3 Cups of Tea,” unabridged audio book and the new children’s book “Listen to the Wind” both by Greg Mortenson.

New Service: AccuCut

The Resource Center for Churches purchased the Mark IV Roller Die Cutting Machine in January 2009 with a grant from the United Church of Christ’s Ashley Fund. Bring in your own paper and have fun getting creative.

Acquiring dies for use with this machine is an ongoing process with funding coming from generous donors, such as the Christian Educators Fellowship, who purchased the Christian Sacrament Set. If you are interested in sponsoring a die, contact us at info@resourcesforthejourney.org or call 612-870-0861.

Current Holdings include:

4" Block Alphabet – Uppercase, Lowercase, Numbers.

DS128 Easter Set

Flower-Easter Lily (F1419L)	Cross #6 (C2408L)
Branch-Palm (B1613L)	Tomb (T1279J)
Word – Blessed Easter (W1887J)	Jesus (J1100L)
Woman-Bible (W1312L)	

DS094L Christian Sacrament Set

Chalice (C1650)	Chi-Rho (C1712)
Cross #1 (C2400)	Dove #4 (D1073)
Flames (F1305)	Grapes (G1000)
Hand #3 (H1021)	Raindrops #2 (ZR1200)
Wheat (W1124)	

DS118L Nativity Set #2

Nativity Wiseman (N1300)	Nativity Manger and Hay (N1301)
Nativity Joseph (N1302)	Nativity Shepherd (N1303)
Nativity Baby & Mary (N1304)	Nativity Angel (N1305)

P1622 Puzzle Cross #2 Jumbo; 79-H1215A Heart #3 Clearcut Large;
CR700J Circle-Scalloped - 5 1/4" Jumbo

Learn more about AccuCut at their website: www.accucut.com

Summer Closure Dates

**Closing 4:00 p.m.,
June 26.**

**Reopening 9:30 a.m.,
August 4th.**

Feature Article: New Service: Accucut

1

Great Websites for Children

2

Insert: Opportunity to learn about safety for your teens.

3

“Become Proactive for Church Safety”

4

Resources and Ideas

5, 6

Practicing Discernment

7

CHICAGO - The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), has added more recommended Web sites to Great Web Sites for Kids (www.ala.org/greatsites), its online resource containing hundreds of links to commendable Web sites for children.

Great Web Sites for Kids (GWS) features links to beneficial Web sites of interest to children, organized by subject headings such as animals; literature and languages; sciences; the arts; and reference desk. There is also a special section with sites of interest to parents, caregivers and teachers, plus an area devoted to sites in Spanish. The ALSC Great Web Sites for Kids Committee maintains and updates the site.

The newly added sites are:

Activity TV - www.activitytv.com

Animal Fact Guide – www.animalfactguide.com

BaseballRox – www.baseballrox.com

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art - www.carlemuseum.org

Chemicool – www.chemicool.com

Dawn - <http://dawn.jpl.nasa.gov/DawnKids/index.asp>

Mem Fox: Teaching, Learning, Living - www.memfox.com

Kevin Henkes - www.kevinhenkes.com

Horizon Magic Porthole – www.magicporthole.org

KidsClick! Web search for kids by librarians – www.kidsclick.org

Maisy's Fun Club - www.maisyfunclub.com

School Time Games - www.schooltimegames.com

Jon Scieszka Worldwide - www.jsworldwide.com

Charles R. Smith, Jr. - www.charlesrsmithjr.com

Speakaboos - www.speakaboos.com

Tate Kids - <http://kids.tate.org.uk/>

The Audrey Wood Clubhouse - www.audreywood.com

ALSC is a secular professional library organization, which selects these sites for all who work with children. I am personally always gathering great websites for faith formation and church issues. Please feel free to share your favorites with me. -Ginger

A SHARING STORY FROM MY LISTSERV: The church I left last September had a small church school group with attendance problems on Sunday morning. So we canceled Sunday School and switched to Wednesday night Church School with a free, simple meal offered the first Wednesday of each month (I would have preferred each week to make it more attractive to parents with children). The sessions were intergenerational with topical programming determined by the group. I intentionally programmed in lots of interaction between older and younger members of the group, including opportunities for faith sharing.

Most of the sessions were helpful and participants seemed to appreciate the new learnings. Topics varied including outside speakers on various topics (Heifer Project, Community service, etc.), Islam (following 9-11), Bible knowledge competition by teams using a computer program, learning about Advent while making Advent candle logs, etc. Flexibility was key, and interactive participation very important. Overall, participants really enjoyed the more informal fellowship (particularly around the meals), the intergenerational interaction, and the more relaxed setting. Bob Atkinson, Campaign Development Director, Missouri Mid-South Conference, UCC. (**See our book: "Christian Education for the Small Church," Judson Press, 1988.**)

IDEA FOR FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH:

I don't think there are any factual answers to "what is the meaning of life" (except maybe the responses in the catechism to questions like that) but it's an individual lifelong exploration, informed perhaps by everything we read, think, hear and feel, experience and our answers change with time.

What would it be like if this kid made a ritual on his baptismal anniversary or some other date, of talking with his parents about what he thinks the answer might be that year or writing a paragraph that he could keep and look back over as he grows? I'm just thinking how interesting it would be to see how views change over the years, and it would be good to keep the big questions in mind so that we don't get sucked into the "the purpose of life is to collect the most toys" frame of mind.



MRL? A/S/L? W/E!

Translated for Parents: Meet in Real Life,
Age/Sex/Location, Whatever!

Internet Safety Skills for Parents and Teens



*Do your teens and pre-teens have the basic information
they need to help protect their digital footprints?*

*Do you know how to begin the conversation about Internet and Cell phone safety with
your teen?*

6:30-8:30 pm, Wednesday, April 8

Open to all parents and teens in grades 5th-8th

Episcopal Church of the Nativity, Burnsville

Many parents wonder how to keep up with their teen in the face of changing technology. If you feel that your teenager MAY know more than you do about social networking or text messaging, this session may be the first step to trigger needed conversations about Internet safety with you and your teen.

What Parents are saying:

"Fantastic overview! I feel pro-active and not scared. Thanks." - Parent

"This should be mandatory for all kids and parents." - Parent

What Teachers are saying:

"Alison Feigh did a wonderful job presenting the information. She works well with this age group. Love her no nonsense approach." - Jr. High School Teacher

"This is something that parents need to hear." - High School Teacher

What Teenagers are saying:

"I need to be smart about Internet Safety...and report things that I know are wrong."
- Teen

"I learned that I need to listen to my gut more." - Pre-Teen

Alison Feigh has been with the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center since 2001 delivering youth and teen-centered safety messages to the public, assisting families with missing and exploited children issues, and providing key information to media and law enforcement.

She has done extensive media interviews as a subject matter expert on the topic of child and teen safety including interviews with CNN, FOX News, and local news stations. Alison Feigh is also the author of two nationally released books for children on personal body safety and is a frequent speaker at faith communities, schools and community groups.

Questions? Anna Ostenso at 952.435.8687 www.nativityepiscopal.net

Church of the Nativity, 15601 Maple Island Rd., Burnsville, MN 55306

Become Proactive for Church Safety

The First Baptist Church in Marysville, just east of St. Louis, Missouri, was recently in the news because a man with mental health problems invaded the congregation during Sunday worship and while the pastor was preaching he walked to the front of the sanctuary and shot and killed the pastor. Two other church members were seriously injured when they tried to subdue the shooter and were stabbed with the knife he was carrying. About two years ago a similar incident occurred in a Samoan UCC congregation in Joplin, Missouri. The perpetrator shot the pastor, the perpetrator's wife and another family member. Apparently the pastor had been doing marriage counseling with the perpetrator and his wife and he was not pleased with the advice he had received. Congregations are discussing finding a way to establish an emergency procedure to implement were something of this nature to emerge when church is gathered for worship or some other activity.

Do you know of any church that has such a policy or strategy? Have you discussed it in your congregation? What are ways to try to insure the fewest of injuries? How or who should notify the police and fire departments when emergency assistance is required?

The above was brought to a professional listserv by Frank Proctor of the Christ Church UCC, 7126 Bruno Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63143. This brought forth some chatter and suggestions, most notably the following:

We have been thinking about similar issues at my church. We are lucky to have as a member of our church the police officer who works with the schools in town to develop safety plans and procedures. I asked him to do a security walk through for us and give us recommendations for what we could do to keep church attendees of all ages as safe as possible in situations like those two. He went above and beyond that, and gave us a full security report and recommendations for all sorts of improvements we could make.

I would highly recommend that you do the same thing - call an officer who is part of your congregation, or if you don't happen to have any church members who are police officers, just call up your local PD. I'm sure they will be pleased that you are proactively thinking about these situations and will want to be as much help as possible.

Heather Eaton, Director of Christian Education for Wapping Community Church in South Windsor CT.

I couldn't think of any way to improve upon bringing forth the problem or a better plan of action. Call your local professionals today. — Ginger Stemme

For more about safety go to:

“Drawing the Line on Danger: What to Do When Someone Scary Enters Your Church,” by Lee A. Dean posted 3/2/2009 at www.christianitytoday.com

“Protect Your Church from Crime & Violence” posted 5/14/2008 <http://churchsafety.com>

Resources available at the Center:

"Making Our Churches Safe for All" is a beginning guide to leading the congregation through a process of developing policies for creating a climate of safety. Published by The United Church of Christ, 2005. PE172

“Protecting Kids Online,” DV260 This 22-minute Internet safety resource speaks to parents and caregivers on topics from understanding the serious repercussion of cyber-bullying to learning how to safeguard our children from online predators. A leader's guide is provided.

Safe and Secure: The Alban Guide to Protecting Your Congregation, 1999. BK1858

Resources and Ideas

NEW RESOURCES:

“Money and Faith: A Journey of the Heart,” by Michael Schut Church Publishing, Incorporated, 2008. BK4552

In this timely collection, Michael Schut prompts us to explore our relationship with money, along with Henri Nouwen, Walter Brueggemann, Bill McKibben, Lynne Twist, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and many others. Money and Faith encourages you to listen to your own story as you consider issues of happiness and trust, investments and retirement, equity and ecology, and scarcity and abundance. A diversity of voices and a community-building study guide make this an ideal resource for both individuals and groups.

“Inside the Teenage Brain,” by PBS. DVD314 uses the humor of the comic strip Jeremy juxtaposed against clips of real teens and information from experts to explain new findings about the teenage brain. Very interesting viewing!

<http://www.ucc.org/education/bibliographies/> provides several bibliographies of resources being used by United Church of Christ congregations which are:

- * Inclusive
- * Multi-racial and Multi-cultural
- * Age or interest specific
- * Currently available (from United Church of Christ Resources or another publisher)
- * Printed or Multi-Media

Bibliographies which are currently available include:

Education Resources for Adult Study
Resources for Youth Ministry
Resources for Ministry with Older Adults
Books and Study Guides on Ending Racism

SUGGESTION FROM A PATRON

Every other week, my church's Bible Study group meets for two hours to read and discuss a passage from scripture. Sometimes we take a break from Bible study to consider a different topic. Recently it was my responsibility to present one of these "different" topics, so I went to the Resource Center for Churches to look for some ideas. While searching through the shelves, a video caught my eye - *The Amistad Revolt: All We Want Is Make Us Free*, produced by the Amistad Committee, Inc., 1995. It's the story of how a group of Africans were brought to America against their will in the 1830's and how people of faith in New England worked for the liberation of this group. The video is 33 minutes long. I continued to look for other videos and came across *A Call to Care: Welcoming African Refugees*, United Methodist Committee on Relief, General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, 18 minutes. It is a documentary about Africans living in this century who choose to come to America to look for a better life and how they are sponsored by communities of faith. The two videos provide a contrast of experience for Africans encountering America and the ways churches respond with compassion and justice. Our study group watched the two videos consecutively in less than an hour. We had plenty of time to discuss them. In a short visit to the Resource Center, I found the resources I needed for my Bible study group. My concern about public performance rights was allayed because both videos are covered by license, as are most of the videos at the Resource Center. Hundreds of other video and print options are offered at the Resource Center for small group study. The next time you make a presentation to a small group, go to the Resource Center for ideas and get help from staff to find the resource you need.

By Ron Cottone, member, Judson Memorial Baptist Church of Minneapolis

Idea Exchange

Idea #1

One year we had families set up electric bread makers around the church and have bread baking - the smell was wonderful. Then as people entered the church, the disciples were dancing, lounging on big pillows on the floor, flutists playing, etc - making it like an old fashioned Passover celebration.

The service continued with Jesus washing feet, and offering communion. It was powerful.

Idea #2

Another program that we do every year during lent.... We cut out paper butterflies that the children sell in memory / honor of loved ones. People write the person's name on the butterfly and on Easter morning, the butterflies are all over the church decorating the sanctuary and a list of names are in the bulletin. The money collected (\$1 each) is used for the youth mission trip.

From: Karlene Archambeault
<mskbarchambeault@sbcglobal.net>

Our pastor used a Reader's Theater play behind a screen (sheet hung in front of the players). It was very effective. Any appropriate play could be used including a regular drama with movement. The silhouette carried the message and was a refreshing approach.

From: Elizabeth A. Shook
Christian Education Consultant
United Church of Christ
Wellsville, New York

For the past few years we have had an Easter egg hunt on the lawn before worship. We stuff little plastic eggs with Easter stickers, teddy grahams, jelly beans, Chenille chicks and easter finger puppets. We try to make enough for 10 each. That's about 700 for our church. It really brings out the families and it is a very joyful occasion!

During worship, our church has Easter activities for the children in the social hall. They stay in for half of the worship service and then come and enjoy the crafts. It is not as inclusive as staying for the whole worship but seems to work out for everyone, especially the youngest children.

Betsy Woodward
Minister of Christian Education
Congregational Church of San Mateo UCC
650-343-3694
bwoodward@ccsm-ucc.org

Six years ago our church had a sermon series on Journeying with Christ. We had banners made (hand painted silk) that symbolized the corresponding "I Am" identity of Christ that was the core of the sermon.

The sermon topics were "I Am".. the bread of life; the light of the world; the living water; the vine; the good shepherd and sheep gate; the way, the truth and the life; and the resurrection and the life.

Each week a new banner was hung symbolizing the corresponding "I Am: identity of Christ. This provided a very powerful visual arts for our worship.

Cathy Schulz, First Congregational UCC Battle Creek, MI
cathys@fccbc.org

Did you know Today's English Version of the Bible was originally developed as a Bible for folks for whom English is a Second language? It has that kind of direct translation.

Bibliographies on Aging:
<http://www.ucc.org/education/older-adults/> for some ideas and resource reviews at <http://gargoyle.union-psce.edu/aging/index.html>.

You all know about progressive resources like Living the Questions and The Thoughtful Christian, but here's a website you can recommend to churches who are looking for additional help with being a theologically-progressive voice in their community and in their education ministries. [Different Voice](http://www.differentvoice.com) is an ecumenical website for Christian educators which provides a daily email/blog, articles, file sharing, product reviews, and more. All of the content is currently free, with a "set your own membership fee" policy. The site is run by Tim Gossett and Sally Hoelscher, two United Methodist Christian educators in Iowa. Take a look, and if you have a links page on your own website, please link to them at <http://www.differentvoice.com>.

What's a church to do?

Churches have a dream, but a dream does not equal magic bullet (meaning something that will instantly get our program to look like it did 25 years ago). Some churches are asking for the latter, and there is no such thing. Then the question is whose dream...the kids', the parents', the congregations', the communities', God's?? There is a cost for each one, including God's dream and there is no pleasing them all!

In several churches with many mature Christian parents, I see them moving from the Sunday School model towards a children's worship time. Education takes place in the home and sometimes at church. Many of these are writing their own curriculum. Materials used include: Worship for Life, The Way of the Child and Godly Play.

Churches are in a time of trial and error, working with a brand new generation. In addition, there's lots of diversity among congregations. That's why family systems theory is now very applicable! Therefore, what "works" for one church will not necessarily work for another even if they are similar. What does seem to be helpful is to have a missionary perspective, with an emphasis on discernment and understanding the target culture.

There are all kinds of tools out there that can be used:

Appreciative Inquiry by Mark Lau Branson,

Holy Conversations by Gil Rendle and Alice Mann (BK1010), or

Discerning God's Will Together by Danny Morris and Charles Olsen.

If the leadership already has experience with one such resource, then that would be best. Given that it is a large church, they've been using something that can just be adapted to their specific area of ministry.

Also, I would recommend a planning resource like *Embracing the Future* (BK662) edited by Linda Isham.

I'm sure there are other resources along those that I don't know about which others can contribute.

Grace and peace,

The Rev. Jeri Viera Dahlke

Director of Educational Ministries

Sierra Mission Partnership

The RCC staff recommend "Practicing Discernment with Youth: A Transformative Youth Ministry Approach," David F. White The Pilgrim's Press, 2005.



Resource Center for Churches

122 W. Franklin Avenue, Room 2
Minneapolis, MN 55404

612-870-0861 or 888-293-9901 (toll free)

Email: info@resourcesforthejourney.org

Website: www.resourcesforthejourney.org

Your Partner in Ministry

The Resource Center for Churches partners with congregations in ministry by providing print and audio-visual resources, consultation services, training, and networking to facilitate the journey of faith.

It is an ecumenical ministry of the: Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota; Minnesota Annual Conference United Methodist Church; Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ; Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area; Synod of Lakes and Prairies (PCUSA).

Staff

*Ginger Stemme, Director
Sally Vanderwerf, Resource Assistant*

Board

Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota: Bronwyn Clark Skov, Joanie Delameter, Minnesota Annual Conference, United Methodist Church: Victoria Rebeck, Gloria Roach Thomas, Diane C. Olson; Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ: Glen Herrington Hall (Secretary), Wade Zick, Trish Greeves; Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area: Jan Snell, Joanne Shingledecker; Synod of Lakes and Prairies (PCUSA): Diana Barber, Norma Spurgin (Vice-President); At-Large: Ron Cottone (President), and Del Spitzer (UCC).

NOTICE TO ALL RECIPIENTS:

This will be the last paper newsletter you will receive unless you specifically request that format.

We will continue to forward the newsletter electronically to each of the judicatories for distribution or placement upon their websites according to their preference. We will post copies of the newsletter on our website: www.resourcesforthejourney.org. We will release smaller, more frequent informational announcements, which will also be placed upon the home page of our website.

Since we are starting over with our distribution list, please call 612-870-0861/888-293-9901 or email us at info@resourcesforthejourney.org to place yourself on the appropriate list. We will place you on an email list or on a paper copy list according to your preferences and the address you provide. —Ginger Stemme, Director