

# THE MUSTARD SEED



Vol. 36, Issue 9, May, 2009, Edition

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*Coming Up...*  
*See inside for details*

May 10—Pilgrim Guild  
Plant Sale  
May 12—Pilgrim Guild  
Potluck Luncheon  
May 17—Hot Dog  
Lunch for PRISM  
May 17—Women's  
Group  
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Tuesday w/ T.  
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The Church

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**It's May!**

**From Your  
Pastor  
And  
Teacher**

*"It's the obvious things that are often so hard to see."*

—Anonymous

What has become clear over time in this community of faith is that we are inspired and connected as a community of people who pray. It is evident in the numbers of folks each year who sign up for a special prayer practice in Lent. It is evident by the overwhelming praise of the Christian Meditation series led by our student minister. It is evident in the stories of folks when I go to visit them. They may not be in the pews, but people feel very connected to our community via prayer.

I learned many years ago that good leadership identifies the gifts and strengths of people and community. Then they build on those gifts and strengths. These are cornerstones of a healthy community. When the gifts and strengths become the foundation, all of the other challenges and obstacles can be overcome.

Being a community at prayer is one of our cornerstones. This means a couple of things:

1. If prayer/meditation is a part of your faith practice, I hope you feel a renewed sense of support for this commitment.
2. If you consider yourself to be a person who prays occasionally, then I hope you feel an invitation to explore a deeper understanding of what that means to you.
3. If you are not a person who prays at all, that is OK, too. May you feel the prayers of this community. Your gifts are also valuable and supported here. Remember that another one of our strengths as a community is a radical welcome and inclusion for ALL people.

Frank did a wonderful job of introducing the practice of Contemplative Prayer to the Lenten class, so I just want to build on that and remind folks a little bit about this kind of prayer. We often think of prayer as thoughts or feelings expressed in words, but that is only one expression. Contemplative Prayer is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being – to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words and emotions. When we open ourselves to this awareness of God, we may begin to understand what it means to have God within us, closer than breathing. Try sometime in the next week to sit in silence, take a walk, and just be in that holy presence. Feel your breath in harmony with the wind and water, and you may experience a new way to understand and experience God.

A rich and wonderful connection awaits.

See you in church,  
T. Michael



## May Schedule

**May 3, 2009.** Fourth Sunday of Easter. Service at 10:00 a.m. Communion. Infant and toddler care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 years through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Acts 4: 5-12; Psalm 23; I John 3: 16-24; John 10: 11-18.

**May 10, 2009.** Fifth Sunday of Easter. Mother's Day. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Acts 8: 26-40; Psalm 22: 25-31; I John 4:7-21; John 15: 1-8.

**May 17, 2009.** Sixth Sunday of Easter. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Acts 10: 44-48; Psalm 98; I John 5: 1-5; John 15: 1-8.

**May 24, 2009.** Seventh Sunday of Easter. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; I John 5: 1-6; John 17: 6-19.

**May 31, 2009.** Pentecost. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade 10:15 – 11:15 A.M. Lectionary texts: Acts 2: 1-21; Psalm 104: 24-34, 35b; Romans 8: 22-27; John 15: 26-27, 16: 4b-15.

### **Worship at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ**

Sometimes this is called, "silly season" in the church because of our need to squeeze every last bit of celebration and meaning out of the few remaining Sundays before people head to their backyards or cabins. We engage in that frenzy of activity here as well, but it is important to remember that each celebration also contains a depth of meaning that each of us can carry into our lives. So, when you are deciding about whether you want to tend the garden or come to church, choose to come into community. Refresh yourself in the music and meaning of this season of Spirit.

### **May 3<sup>rd</sup> – Communion Sunday**

Scripture Readings – Genesis 1:28 and Romans 14:15-21

Sermon: "What's on Your Menu?" - Frank Bennett

This will be Frank's last sermon as our student minister intern. The Genesis text gives humans dominion over the world. What does "dominion" mean? In the Romans text, Paul reminds the faithful that part of following in the path of Christ is living in such a way that we don't cause harm to our "brothers and sisters." What could he have meant by that? Let's try to tie these two texts together by looking at the link between what we eat and the effect our choices have on this planet.

### **May 10<sup>th</sup> – Sacrament of Baptism for Solomon Davis Campbell – Farewell to Student Minister, Frank Bennett**

Scripture Reading – John 15:1-8

Sermon: "Abiding in Love" – Rev. T. Michael Rock

"Abide in me, and I will abide in you." A wonderful promise from Jesus about this relationship between humanity and God. Let's explore together both the challenge and peace of this profound passage from John.

### **May 17<sup>th</sup> – Choir Recognition and Bible Adventures Recognition Sunday**

Scripture Reading – John 15:9-17

Sermon: "Friends" – Rev. T. Michael Rock

What does it mean to be a friend? How do we understand that concept? Come and explore the complexity of friendship with one another in a spiritual framework. Who are our friends? How do we understand the gift of friendship in a new way?

### **May 24<sup>th</sup> – MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND**

Scripture Readings – Psalm 1 and John 17:6-19

Sermon: "Receiving Prayer" – Rev. T. Michael Rock

It's Memorial Day weekend and even though some of us will be at the lake, it is important to remember that we will be worshipping here at RUCC every week. Rain, snow, sleet, or summer sunshine won't stop the need for some

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from page 2*

to renew their faith each week in worship. This Sunday we will practice not just praying for others, but also receiving prayers on our behalf.

### **May 31<sup>st</sup> – PENTECOST SUNDAY and CONFIRMATION SUNDAY - Strengthen the Church Offering**

This will be special celebration of the origins and meaning of church and the celebration of our journey of confirmation. Kayla Miller has been taking an intentional journey this year, and we will hearing from her, her mentor, Wendy Lukaszewski, and from others on the meaning of church.

*From Student Intern Frank Bennett...*

#### **“See You in Awhile...”**

T. Michael asked me recently how I felt about facing the end of my internship at Robbinsdale UCC. I thought for a bit and said I felt both happy and sad. I’m happy that I have completed a big step on my path towards graduation from United Theological Seminary and ordination in the UCC. As I walk my path of discernment, I’m grateful for the opportunity to explore with all of you the possibilities for ministry. I appreciate more than I can say the unstinting support all of you have given me over the past 9 months. For the innumerable gifts I have received here at RUCC, I am deeply thankful. Each of you now has a special place in my heart.

I’m also feeling sad because I’m leaving a place that has been home to me. You have truly held me in your care and walked the road of faith alongside me. I feel a little bit like an exchange student from another country who has spent a year with a host family, albeit a rather large one, and been taken in as one of the family. I will go back to my home church, Wayzata Community Church, with memories and some changes. I will carry all of you with me wherever I go, and, if possible, I would like to stay in touch from time to time, as friends are wont to do through the years, so I would prefer to say, “See you in awhile” instead of “Good-bye” or “Farewell.”

I have been privileged to be a part of RUCC as it builds community both within and without. I believe that people who gather together in a community of faith like RUCC are building a bridge from a past that exists only in story and memory to a future that exists only in the imagination of our children. One of my favorite poets, Mary Oliver,

wrote about building - I would like to share it with you:

#### Song of the Builders

On a summer morning

I sat down  
on a hillside

to think about God -

a worthy pastime.

Near me, I saw  
a single cricket;

it was moving the grains of the hillside  
this way and that way.

How great was its energy,  
how humble its effort.

Let us hope

it will always be like this,  
each of us going on  
in our inexplicable ways  
building the universe.

—Mary Oliver

Peace and blessings to you. See you in awhile,

—Frank Bennett

#### **Honoring our Graduates**

On Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, we’ll honor the graduates of RUCC. If you know of anyone who is celebrating this achievement in life, please let the church office know. Whether it is pre-school or doctoral studies or anything in between, your church family wants to celebrate this event with you.



#### **Robbinsdale United Church of Christ at WHIZ BANG DAYS**

**July 12, 2009**

Let’s be in the parade. Hand out candy and walk along side our RUCC float. Our float will be better than ever this year, and a great time will be had by all. We will have fun building this art project, but even more fun spreading the good news of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ to our community. Please talk with T. Michael if you would like to help with frame construction.



## **INTRODUCING APRIL DAVIS CAMPBELL OUR NEW MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Over the last year we have discerned our needs, God's will for us, and the feasibility of our staffing. Thanks to the generosity and passion of our congregation and the commitment to living faithfully, we were able to begin our search for a Minister for Children and Families. The 2008 Annual Meeting approved the process for the search and the budget for this new position. A job description was created, the call was sent out via several avenues to potential candidates. Resumes were received, prayers were lifted up, interviews were conducted by a four-person team. One candidate was identified as an answer to prayer and receiving a call from God to serve in this role. She was introduced to the Coordinating Council on April 21, 2009, and received a unanimous vote approving her call to serve. Her name is April Davis Campbell, and we are honored to be in ministry with her, hopefully for years to come. Please welcome her and share a bit of your incredible story with this new member of our community.

### **The Rev. April M. Davis Campbell**

My call to ordained ministry has taken me from Lincoln, Nebraska, to Princeton, New Jersey, to Omaha, Nebraska, to New York, New York, to Stillwater, Minnesota, and now here to Robbinsdale United Church of Christ.

Most recently I was an Associate Pastor for four and a half years. I was busy preaching once a month, doing pastoral care, and teaching in many capacities. I interacted with every age group and was energized by every day of my ministry.

Prior to arriving in Minnesota, I lived, worked and volunteered in Lincoln, Nebraska, until I left for Princeton Theological Seminary. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and a Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey.

Before attending seminary, I worked for the State of Nebraska Health and Human Services System, Financial Services Division, as a program analyst in the area of long-term care, doing data and statistical analysis. While working for the State of

Nebraska, I spent my free time on various committees and task forces at the PC (USA) church and presbytery level as well as volunteering for the Lincoln Amateur Radio Club and the American Red Cross. I was the Interim Director of Youth Ministries at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, Nebraska, co-directed week-long summer camps and retreats at Camp Calvin Crest, a Presbyterian affiliated camp in Fremont, Nebraska, and wrote curriculum for summer camp.

In my spare time I enjoy running, reading, traveling, and spending time with husband Bob, sons Emmett and Solomon, and dog Daisy. I feel very passionately about my call to ministry, and I find great joy in serving God and the church. I see great hope in the life of the church and I am motivated and enthusiastic to further God's kingdom on earth. I look forward to getting to know you, sharing ministry and following God's call together.

### **Tuesdays w/T., 6:00 p.m. A Bible Study for Beginners**



This will be a wonderful time to explore and learn from each other about the scripture. This Bible Study is designed in a way that folk are welcome to drop in from time to time, or attend every week. No homework is required, and all questions are welcome. Bible Study will last one hour. This month we will be reading some letters written by followers of Paul and seeking wisdom for our own life as a church. Come and explore what it says about God and what it says to us. I believe it is both important to read the Bible and also to read it in community. This is the invitation to you to come. All levels are welcome and there is child care provided. If you have any questions, please talk with T. Michael.

Special Satellite Bible Study—**May 26<sup>th</sup>**  
at Waterford – Noontime  
(bring your own lunch)

**Important Tuesdays w/ T. Event  
for All Who Wish to Participate  
May 26, 5:00 p.m.—Tuesdays w/ T. at T.'s house**  
Dinner and discussion about hopes and dreams for our continual exploration of the Bible. Come and have a voice in the direction of this study whether you have attended before or not.

## Coordinating Council

April 21, 2009

\*Council voted to call April Davis Campbell as Minister for Children and Families (see article elsewhere in this issue).

\*Treasurer: Pledge income slightly behind; expenses in line.

\*Re: fund raising line item in budget. Projects underway or in future: coin jar, quilt raffle, carpet project, cabaret, coffee house performance, Fruit of Spirit.

\*Lists of goals needed from ministries.

\*Jim Puffer discussed the effort to see a Minnesota Without Poverty by 2020. He is on a statewide team working on this. He would like to see it become a project for RUCC as well. (See also Jim's article on poverty elsewhere in this issue).

\*Council reviewed requests for Endowment Fund income distribution (see article below).

\*Confirmation May 31.

\*May 10 is Frank Bennett's last day. There will be cake.

\*Community Outreach: Earth Day park clean-up was well-attended; selling Mother's Day certificates to benefit Home Free.

## Endowment Income Awarded

Congratulations to everyone who submitted applications for 2009 RUCC Endowment Grants. At the RUCC Coordinating Council meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2009, \$6300 was awarded in the following amounts, in accordance with our bylaws:

### Community Outreach, at least one-fourth

\$1600 for the Hosterman-Myers Community Garden

### Wider Church, at least one-fourth

\$1075 for Pilgrim Point

\$500 for Friends of the Conference

### Capital Expense, up to one-fourth

\$690 for repairs to the elevator pump

\$860 for landscaping

### Scholarship, up to one-fourth

\$1000 for the Common Hope "Vision Team" Mission

Trip to Guatemala

\$400 for leadership scholarships

\$175 for grant writing workshop

—Tracy Thomas Wilson, Clerk

on behalf of the RUCC Coordinating Council

## Common Hope

Members of RUCC have sponsored children through *Common Hope* over a number of years and several trips to visit Common Hope in Antigua and/or New Hope Village. If you have sponsored a child or children in the past or are current sponsors, National and Global Ministry would like you to let us know. Please contact Dale Fisher, Karrie Haugen, Chioma Onwukwe, Cheryl Nordquist or Louiva Puffer about your sponsorship.

\* \* \* \* \*

Plans are being made at RUCC for a Common Hope "Vision Team" mission trip to Guatemala next year. If you are interested in going or learning more about it, see Dale Fisher or Cheryl Nordquist.

\* \* \* \* \*

RUCC is a Common Hope Partner for ten-year-old Ronald Francisco Jiatz Zamona in San Pedro Las Huertas, Guatemala. Look for Ronald's photo on the easel in the narthex and read his letter, along with the sponsorship activity report. By participating with Common Hope, we help impoverished Guatemalan families with an opportunity for a better life through education, health care, and housing.



*The suggested donation* for PRISM's Food Shelf for May is chili. As always, ANY donation is gratefully accepted. Let's give to PRISM and help our neighbors in need!

*The annual Hot Dog Lunch* to benefit PRISM is Sunday, May 17. Join your RUCC friends for lunch that day!



## Community News

Our sympathy to the family and friends of Barbara Webber who died at the age of 98 on April 21. A memorial service will be held later in Pennsylvania.

*One of the purposes of RUCC's Faith Community Nursing group is to provide health education.*

## **Giving Blood**

Blood donors are everyday people with a desire to give back to their community. They are high school students, business executives and everyone in between—people with a generous spirit, whose gift means life to patients in need

Whether at a blood drive in a community or at a donation center in the city, every blood donor plays an integral role in the delivery of modern health care. Many diseases, surgeries and conditions require blood transfusions in order for treatments to be successful and recovery to be possible. Because each unit of blood is separated into three components - red cells, platelets and plasma - each donation can help to save up to three lives.

The need for blood is constant. On average, just 5 percent of eligible individuals donate blood despite the fact that 95 percent of Americans will need blood at some point in their lives. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Donors must be at least 17-years-old, 16-years-old with a signed Red Cross parent/guardian [consent form](#), and must weigh at least 110 pounds.



In September, the Faith Community Nurses and Community Outreach will be sponsoring a blood drive here at church. Watch for more information on how you can participate.

## **May Stewardship Message**

*Imagine yourself in the story ... almost a meditation.*

*Then he said to them "whose head is on this [coin] and whose title?...When they heard this, they left him and went away. (Matthew 22: 20, 22)*

The Pharisees and Herodians are gone. All the people trying to trap Jesus left. In fact, all the stresses in your life have temporarily slunk away. Some of those stresses involve money – a debt, a legacy, a job worry. People were never able to challenge Jesus with money problems. He let them go. So can you.

You are in the story with Jesus and his circle of disciples. He told his challengers they should

render God, God-things, and render the contemporary world things that belong to it. You do render God prayer, worship, little deeds of justice or compassion – a letter to your senator, work at the soup kitchen, care for someone who is young or old or lonely, your offering. But the denarius, the twenty dollar bill? You want to ask Jesus how you should render your money. There are so many good things. Groceries – good. Something for a child – prom dress, gymnastics lessons, college education – good. A vacation – good. Rent, a car payment ... a new car – good.

Do you think God doesn't care how you use money that doesn't go to church? Wrong. Jesus sits with a denarius, waiting to show every disciple a different face on it – a *this-world* place that is right for *this* coin. Jesus holds out a coin to you (or maybe a bill). What do you see? The face on the coin is not harmful but hopeful. It may be inexpensive or a big investment. It's best for you, those you love, those around you, and some you don't even know.

Holding the coin, think what spending this money means. What other things will it touch? What other people? The face on the coin will be different another day. Close your imaginary hand and ask God to bless it. When you open your hand, the coin will be gone, but the memory will be there.

*Maren C. Tirabassi is pastor of Union Congregational UCC of Madbury, NH. Her most recent book is God in My Life: How and Why We Share Faith Stories.*

**May 2009**

God is still speaking,



**WORSHIP PLANNING AT RUCC IS OPEN TO ALL!**

**Wednesday, May 20th – 7:00pm  
At the home of Dawn Carlson Conn**

We will be planning worship themes and events through the end of September, including our Great Fall Get-Together. All are welcome.

Please call the church office for directions to Dawn's house.

**May Schedule...**

**INTERFAITH LEISURE AGE  
9 AM. SOCIAL HOUR  
12 NOON LUNCH AND PROGRAM:  
Lunch Reservations Required  
Elim Lutheran Church.  
3748 West Broadway in Robbinsdale**

May 7: "Al Cartoonist": A surprise!

May 14: Dick Macko, accordion player & singer.

May 21: Blood pressures taken 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
Program: Touching Hearts, a new show with vocalist  
Bob Clark and pianist Mary Kopat.

May 28: May Birthday Party. Program: Joe Berner,  
singer and keyboardist.

Leisure Age meets on Thursday from 9:00-2:00.  
Lunch costs \$9.00. It is now necessary to make  
reservations if you plan to attend. If you're present  
one week, you can sign the reservation book that is  
passed at the table to attend the following week. If  
you are not present, you can make reservations  
Monday 9 a.m. to noon by calling Jean Lindstrom at  
763-537-1171. You may also use this number to  
cancel a reservation.

*If you have any questions, please contact:*

*Jan Paulsen, 763-529-1986*

*or Keith Smith, 612-588-1401 or 763-588-4356*

**—SUPPORT OUR PILGRIM GUILD—**

***Pilgrim Guild Annual Plant Sale***



The Pilgrim Guild will hold their annual Plant Sale after church on Mother's Day, May 10. We would welcome donations of indoor and outdoor plants. It's a great time of the year to divide some of your plants. Proceeds from the sale will go towards some of the wish list items needed in the church, so come with plants and go home with different plants. What fun!

***Pilgrim Guild Spring Luncheon***

The Pilgrim Guild will hold their annual Spring Potluck Luncheon and Social on Tuesday, May 12, at noon. Come bring your favorite dish to share. All are welcome! Our hostesses are Erma Andrews, Jean Hosterman, and Kathy Giddings. Be thinking about programs you might like to have next year. *Bon appétit!*



**Creating Community Art Together!**

As some of you know, I am in the process of being commissioned as a liturgical artist by the United Church of Christ. For several years I have been working with other congregations in different ways to create meaning for their communities of faith using textiles. I have pieced stoles and communion tablecloths with fabric donated from members; painted and dyed cheesecloth with members to hang from ceilings for Advent, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost; have custom made stoles and paraments, and currently I am working with Lyndale UCC on a piece to help them remember the incredible stained glass window which they left behind when they sold their building. They are now worshipping at Intermedia Arts until their new building is prepared for them and Salem Lutheran Church. I have done a bit of this type of work at RUCC as well, but as part of my journey toward commissioning, I want to do something with you I've never done before: to create a communion cloth and related items that will truly be created BY the congregation. **NO** – you don't have to bring fabric – **NO**, you don't have to sew. Liturgy literally means "the work of the people," and so I want to co-create WITH you – all of you. We're not artists – we're people who experience life together as a community. And I want what we create to reflect that. I have a few names of people interested in working with me, but I'd love to have a few more. When I graduated from seminary, a friend gifted me with a one-winged angel – the doll's creator said it was "she who flies best in the company of others."

I know you have ideas that will help me make this a better and more meaningful experience for all than if I were working in isolation. Though I know we don't often read the Mustard Seed and immediately call someone to offer help, I'd like you to think about calling me if you feel at all curious or called (remember the burning bush!) to try something brand new. The Worship Ministry needs to be planning for the summer and fall now, so please call soon so we can get together by mid-May. The actual "creation" of this people project will not occur until fall. Thanks for reading this and consider calling Dawn Carlson Conn (763-424-6525).

## Experiencing Poverty or Living in Poverty?

Try this quiz. Would you prefer A or B?

- A. Sleep in your street clothes on a hard foam mattress. You are 12 inches from a stranger on each side on the basketball floor as you all sleep, snore, cough and talk in your sleep with 37 other men or
  - B. Sleep in your PJ's in your own bed in a small apartment that you rent?
- 
- A. Get up at 4:30 AM on a rainy day to catch a bus to the Metrodome in the hopes of getting a minimum wage job cleaning bathrooms. You have everything you own in a black garbage bag you take with you and guard carefully or
  - B. Get up at 6:30 AM, make breakfast, put on clean day clothes and drive to a 40 hour a week job that allows you to pay for your apartment?

These choices are real ones thousands people make every day. As I continue to learn about poverty, it has become clear that people do not choose to live in poverty. They experience poverty because they do not have the resources, knowledge, skills and support they need to break the cycle. Those who are able to get help are very grateful and happy to finally be able to take care of themselves and re-join mainline society.

### Imagine a Minnesota Without Poverty in 2020!

—Jim Puffer

### SUMMER WORSHIP AT RUCC

Do you feel called to tell your story? There are openings in the summer schedule for preaching and sharing a summer witness. Please talk with T. Michael or a member of the Worship Ministry when you are prepared to answer that call.

### Biking at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ

It's time to think of spring and getting back on the bicycle. There are many folks at RUCC who love to ride. Each Sunday this summer we will invite anyone and everyone out for Sunday afternoon bike rides of various lengths and challenge. We will also stop for ice cream along the route. It should be a great way to get the heart pumping and be able to spend some time with our church family.



You are also invited to join the RUCC bike team on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, for the Allianz MS Ride. It is an easy 30 mile or 60 mile ride. All you have to do is sign on to the MS Ride website and sign up under our team, RUCC Love. It should be a great way to extend our community this summer and help raise money for this important cause.

### Robbinsdale United Church of Christ LISTENING PROJECT

Five Assumptions:

1. This church belongs to the people for the purpose of worshiping God and serving ALL people.
2. Every opinion and/or idea matters when living in community.
3. It's time to listen to the needs, concerns, and visions of our congregation.
4. If we all learn to listen, we further our understanding of living a "we" existence in a "me" world.
5. It's the best way to remind folks that everyone of you are loved.

During this year of 2009, the Coordination Council has supported the formation of a listening project to guide us into a long range planning process. Our goal is to sit down, one on one, with every member and close friend of our congregation. The interviews will be both meaningful and short. During the first few months, the team will conduct interviews after worship and other gatherings of the church. The second phase will be home visits and phone calls to those who don't attend on a regular basis. Please be open to what may happen when all of us feel heard, honored, and loved. This coming fall we will hold a congregational meeting to report on these findings and hopefully determine a clear vision for our future together. Please be thinking and praying on the three questions you will each be asked.

1. Who/What is God to you? Are there any barriers to that relationship?
2. What is Robbinsdale United Church of Christ to you? Are there any barriers to that relationship?
3. If you could change anything you wanted about RUCC what would it be?

Along the way, if you have any questions, please talk with T. Michael at any time.



### Happy Birthday!

Greetings and best wishes to all members and friends of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ who celebrate their birthdays in May.

Nathan	Syverson	May	2
Amanda	Sonquist	May	3
Brad	Welton	May	3
Jeff	Paulsen	May	9
John	Paulsen	May	9
Jim	Puffer	May	12
Lisa	Stroessner	May	12
Nathan	Rock	May	14
Erica	Schultz	May	17
Cesar	Berra	May	18
Stan	Atkinson	May	19
Will	Ihle	May	19
Kaira	Miller	May	21
Rosie	Busch	May	22
Finn	Rogan	May	23
Skip	Wills	May	23
Amy	Hodgson	May	24
Jean	Hosterman	May	24
Kira	Johnson	May	26
Gavin	Schultz	May	27
Katie	Haugen	May	28
Peter	Straight	May	29
Laura	Dumont	May	30
Charles	Dumont	May	31
Sofia	Dumont	May	31

### May 31: We Can “Strengthen the Church”

On May 31, we will have an opportunity to contribute to one of the most important fund drives in the UCC and our Minnesota Conference. The **Strengthen the Church** offering supports our commitment to be a multiracial, multicultural church, open and affirming and accessible to all. Our gifts help start new UCC churches and invigorate existing congregations. Contributions to **Strengthen the Church** have supported new congregations, including the Sudanese UCC in Fargo and Sudan UCC in Sioux Falls. Our gifts to Strengthen the

Church help provide new church coaches and support for the leaders of the new congregations.

In addition, we help provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults. One young man commented, “I can lend support to every justice issue I have ever wanted through my church... I have been looking for a civil rights organization to work with and I have unknowingly been a member of one all my life.” This year the fund also helps to support the popular “God is Still Speaking” campaign.

Our **Strengthen the Church** offerings support our conference as well as the wider UCC. It is an important part of our “5 for 5” recognition as a congregation that participates in the five major funds of the United Church of Christ. The other offerings include Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM), Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing and The Christmas Fund.

—Dale Fisher, National and Global Ministry

### New Members on April 19

We welcome into membership Rick and Mary Wagner. Rick and Mary come to us from Union United Church of Christ in St. Louis Park where Rick served as their pastor for 14 years. Rick has moved into the role as one of our Associate Conference Ministers in Minnesota. This new ministry includes serving all the UCC congregations north of the Twin Cities through development, search and call, and support and care from the conference. We won’t see him much, but we are glad to welcome him home anytime his schedule permits. We are also very fortunate that Mary has found a home here as well, as she gets to explore church membership in a new way. Mary is a family physician at Park Nicollet and is on the adjunct program faculty there. She brings a deep personal faith and a long commitment to being a part of a congregation. Mary and Rick met in church and have been part of wonderful shared ministry during their 21 years of marriage. They have two sons, James and Peter, who we may see from time to time as well.

**MANY THANKS TO YOU!**  
YOU AGAIN MADE IT HAPPEN with your participation in our beautiful Easter Sunday Spring Garden. Special thanks to the Garden Group for coordinating this project.



## Women's Group

*Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>*, marks the next meeting of the Women's Group. Coming off April's discussion of A Walk on the Beach, a few people expressed a strong dislike of the book. This month we will build on that discussion. Be prepared to talk about a friend who made a significant change in your life or someone who made you see things in a different light. For those who disliked the book--maybe we can take some time to discuss what it means to, or why someone would feel the need to, take a year off from their marriage and life. Kathy Jo will lead the discussion.

Instead of potluck this time, women are encouraged to grab a *hot dog lunch (for PRISM)* downstairs and meet after the service upstairs in Heritage Hall. We will be done by 1:00. Hope to see you there!!

June Issue. . .

## Mustard Seed



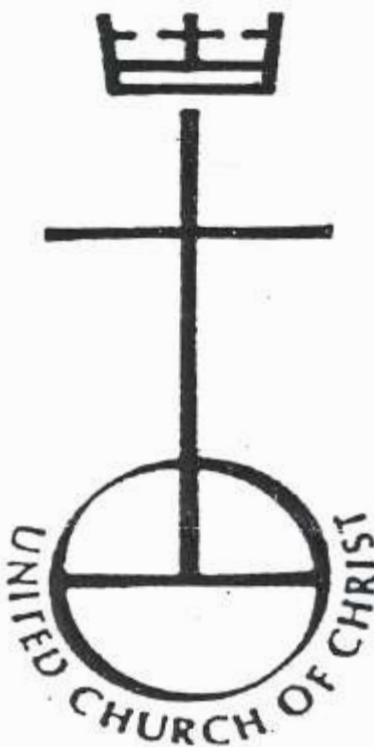
Please place all articles for the next issue of the Mustard Seed in the box marked "Mustard Seed" on the shelf inside the door to the workroom in the church office, *e-mail* to [thewillses@aol.com](mailto:thewillses@aol.com) (preferred) or mail them to Barbara Wills, 6214 Upland Lane No., Maple Grove 55311, so that they are received by the deadline.

### JUNE ISSUE DEADLINE

**Sunday, May 24 , 11 a.m.**

No exceptions please.

(June issue will be mailed Friday, May 29.)



Robbinsdale United Church of Christ  
4200 Lake Road  
Robbinsdale, MN 55422

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