



Fort Collins, Colorado

September 2010

The Communicator

WEAVERS



Welcoming all,
Educating ourselves about the marginalized,
Accepting our giftedness,
Visioning for peace and justice,
Exploring the spirit of diversity,
Responding to our community, and
Serving all.

The following article is shared with the congregation in the spirit of our WEAVERS acronym, especially E, V, and the second E.

All God's Children in the Month of Ramadan



The following sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune Sunday, August 15, 2010, at Broadview Community United Church of Christ in Seattle. [Permission Granted to Duplicate](#)

“For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God might and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the

orphan and the widow, and who loves the stranger, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt . . .” —Deuteronomy 10: 17-19

Three incidents in the news in recent weeks have been deeply disturbing to me.

- The announcement of a plan to burn copies of the Quran, the Muslim sacred text, on 9/11 at a church in Gainesville, FL
- The fierce conflict over building a Muslim mosque near Ground Zero in New York
- The assertion by Ron Ramsey running for governor of Tennessee that Muslims don't deserve the protection of the First Amendment

There is fear in the land, and this fear is being fanned by politicians and some religious leaders alike. There is fear of undocumented workers, fear of lesbian and gay people, fear of Muslims and Jews, fear of evangelicals and progressive Christians. We are afraid of each other.

Fear emerges from one of two places: the known and the unknown. If I know you to be a violent and irrational person full of hate, then I will fear you. If I don't know much about you at all, I will likely fear you . . . until I know better. If I am fed disinformation [lies] about people or a situation, I will likely let those lies feed my fears. But as a Christian and a thinking person, I also have choices about how I deal with my fears.

Most fear of other people is deeply rooted in our perception of someone as “other”—i.e. different than me. Perhaps it is human nature, but we are certainly taught that “different” is “dangerous.” And we think we know something about that different person . . . just by how they look.

So what does our Christian faith tradition teach us about “the other”? In the passage from Deuteronomy, “You shall also love the stranger, for you were stranger in the land of Egypt” refers to the Hospitality Code, which is a central teaching of Judaism and Christianity . . . and Islam. It is a common thread throughout the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Bible. It specifically lifts up three groups of people: widows, orphans, strangers. Why? **Because of their vulnerability.**

Jewish writer Sam Fleischhaker in his reflection on the passage from Deuteronomy asserts that **“God sees the tears of those who are oppressed and have no comforter” and saves everyone from those who are stronger than they are.** The important challenge for us in this teaching is that it is not out of our altruism and goodwill that we are called to love the stranger; it is because we were once strangers in the land of Egypt, so we know what it is like.

How many of you have traveled some place where you didn’t speak the language or understand the customs? Remember your anxiety just because things were so different and unfamiliar? Remember feeling dependent on the strangers around you because you were a stranger among them?

Unfortunately, what some of the “strangers” in our midst are experiencing from some of their neighbors is xenophobia. **This means the fear and hatred of “the other.”** And it has haunted humankind since the beginning of history. The Bible teaches us that God loves the stranger and provides for the stranger and calls us to do

the same. This is the teaching of our Christian faith. But it is not reflected in the fear mongering that we are hearing right now. The ongoing conflict over the building of a Muslim mosque near Ground Zero is a case study in xenophobic fear. If we are ever going to counter the radical misuse of Islam to support acts of terrorism against innocents, we now have to support moderate Muslims who see things very differently.

The good news is that many in New York, including prominent Jewish leaders, have rallied to support the mosque. In fact, the building of this mosque may end up being the occasion of a powerful witness for all of us called to love our neighbor.

There is also good news in response to the announcement of burning the Quran: the National Association of Evangelicals along with Jewish organizations and Christian denominations have condemned the plan and called for American Christians to defend our Muslim neighbors.

And we are all called to engage. Gustav Niebuhr is the grandson of H. Richard Niebuhr and the great nephew of Reinhold Niebuhr, two of America’s greatest theologians of the 20th century. In his book, *Beyond Tolerance*, he challenges us **to not just accept the fact of a multifaith world but to engage it.** Can we be different without being adversarial? So this is beyond tolerance of the other, which is a very low standard; it is actually engaging one another.

As Christians, we are called to be mature and to think critically, to recognize our fears and move beyond them, to recognize injustice when we see it and not hesitate to speak out against it.

One of the scariest posters I saw after 9/11 said, “All I need to know about Islam I learned on 9/11.” No, what I learned on 9/11 is how

little I knew about Islam and how important it was that I get busy and learn.

Muslims have just begun the month of Ramadan. It is a time of fasting every day, of prayer and reflection, and of focusing on good works to help others. It is sort of like Lent and Christmas rolled together for Christians. If you have a Muslim neighbor or coworker, approach that person and wish them many blessings for Ramadan. Tell them that you would like to know more about this holiday and what it means to them. Engage. Look it up on the internet!

Finally, our work at FaithTrust Institute is multi-faith. We work mostly with Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists to address issues of sexual and domestic violence. What I have learned in this work is that when we finally come to the table as peers to share a common work, like ending domestic violence, we engage each other at a very deep level, and the result is that respect and friendship bridge the horrors of the history of our tribes. We don't agree about everything and that is okay. We do agree that women and children should not be abused in their homes. In the engagement, we begin to build trust.

For those of us who are Christians, it's never been easy to follow Jesus. And it's not getting any easier now.

Martin Niemoller was a Lutheran minister in Nazi Germany in 1945. To paraphrase his words for us today:

"THEY CAME FIRST for the undocumented workers, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't an undocumented worker.
THEN THEY CAME for the Muslims, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Muslim.
THEN THEY CAME for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew.
THEN THEY CAME for gays and lesbians, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't gay or lesbian.

AND THEN THEY CAME for me,
and by that time no one was left to speak up."

But many people of faith are speaking up; I urge you to join with us in your neighborhood, your family, your workplace. As thinking, informed, courageous Christians, it is our responsibility to protect the "stranger"; as Americans, it is our responsibility to protect the First Amendment, which guarantees that everyone has a right to practice their own religious tradition.

"God of grace, God of glory . . . grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour." Calm our fears; open our hearts and minds to one another as we seek healing of old wounds and the creation of a new future among us.
Amen.

GET READY FOR CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES!



We are so excited to announce that the children's Sunday School classes, which will begin on Sunday morning, September 12, will be working with an entirely new curriculum this year. It is called "Seasons of the Spirit" and is used successfully by many churches within the U.S. and throughout the world. This curriculum, which covers young children through senior high, was recommended at World Conference last spring for providing excellent lessons which support Community of Christ principles. The adult class will also be using this curriculum. Because the materials are so comprehensive our teachers requested that the starting time for classes be pushed up 15 minutes in order for them to have a full hour with their children. Therefore, the class time will be from 9:45 to 10:45 for children as

well as for the adult class. We encourage parents to have their children at class on time in order to benefit fully from the great lessons.

Teacher assignments follow the breakdown of the "Seasons of the Spirit" curriculum. They include:

- ✚ Tom Beck and Gil Pagat on a rotating basis - Middle and High School
- ✚ Nancy Miller and Debbie Jones on a rotating basis - Ages 9-11
- ✚ Shauna Clark and Sharon Fulton as team teachers - Ages 6-8
- ✚ Marilyn Garner - Ages Birth-5
- ✚ (We do have separate materials for Birth-2 if the need arises.)

As always, we are legally bound to provide two Youth Worker qualified people in each classroom. Those of you who have served as teacher assistants previously have been contacted about participating in this way again this year. We would welcome anyone else who is Youth Worker qualified and who would like to serve as a teacher or teacher assistant to contact Sharon Fulton. Also, if there is anyone who would like to go through the Youth Worker qualification process, we would be happy to set up a training session.

**REMEMBER—SUNDAY MORNING,
SEPTEMBER 12, 9:45 A.M.**

Hunger Challenge 2010

September 24–26



STAND UP to Hunger! September 24–26 is the mission center's second Hunger Challenge hosted at the Fort Collins congregation. **This is an intergenerational event.** Stephen Donahoe from Outreach International is bringing the guest ministry this year with classes, recreation

and the Sunday sermon. The Fort Collins Congregation will share in that service. Start gathering your pledges for the 24-hour fast, get ready to be creative with your outdoor art demonstrations, put on your dancing shoes for our Saturday night celebration, grab a tent (if you're a high school youth or young adult) to sleep in our tent village, and join us for a pancake breakfast and worship in the park on Sunday. It's going to be an AMAZING event! Thanks to Karyn Wingard-Manuel for co-directing this year! Contact DeziRae Astle dastle@CofChrist.org for more info. All funds raised benefit Outreach International: <http://www.outreach-international.org> (All monies raised must be turned in at registration to receive raffle tickets!)

September 1st—Registration Deadline for Rockies Delegation Peace Colloquy Youth Retreat. In order to receive mission center funding for air travel youth MUST register by September 1. Airfare will be purchased before September 5th. This is what you need to do to register your youth grades 6–12 BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1:

- 1) Go online to the Community of Christ website to register youth: <http://www.CofChrist.org/peacecolloquy/>. The cost is \$25 for the Peace Colloquy AND youth retreat (starting 7 pm Friday the 29th and ending 12 pm Sunday the 31st—there are costs beyond this for our delegation as we travel to Independence.) You have to do the "Register Online" process where you will find payment options (or print a form and mail it in with payment) AND fill out the "Youth Retreat Release" and send in per instructions.
- 2) Send to the mission center office the youth's proof of registration and payment and a copy of their Youth Retreat Release form (all of which should have been sent in to the world church). Additionally fill out the ROCKIES youth event registration (found at <http://CofChristrm.org/2010YouthRegistrationForm.pdf> under youth events) and send in the \$50 MC Fee.

USA National Conference



Wednesday, July 18, 2012–July 22, 2012,
Independence, Missouri, at International
Headquarters. Registration fees and offerings
will cover the expense of the event. The
registration cost will be set by October 2011.

Directory Update



Newman, Carrie

Dicke, Avery and Aidan

1407 Glen Haven Dr.

Fort Collins, CO 80526

Home: 970/568-8002

Cell: 970/213-2428

Financial Report



July Income

World Church

World Ministries	\$1,455.00
Oblation	267.00
World Hunger	95.00

Local

Local Offering	\$2,746.50
Building Fund	20.00
2 Cents a Meal	31.00
Family Assistance	135.00

—Betty Jones, CFO

Second Sunday Socials



September 12: Bowling Party followed by
food at the church. Coordinator, Pat
Miner

September Birthdays



Joy Jones	09/02
Art Dirlam	09/04
Felicia Bridwell	09/09
Donna Clark	09/11
Taylor Thomas	09/11
Caren Alton	09/13
Gabriel Pagat	09/15
Shawnea Pagat	09/15
Kathy Graybill	09/22
Tom Beck	09/23
Jan Newman	09/25
Ets Cunningham	09/30

Keyboard, Greeters, and Nursery Schedules



Keyboard:

- ❖ September 5: Kay Bunch
- ❖ September 12: Sharon Troyer
- ❖ September 19: Tom Beck
- ❖ September 26: Jean Newman

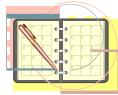
Greeters:

- ❖ September: Vergean Wood,
Dave Simons

Nursery:

- ❖ September 5: Voni Simons
- ❖ September 12: Marta Remmenga
- ❖ September 19: Nancy Miller
- ❖ September 26: Sharon Fulton

❖ September Calendar



Check the Web site

<http://cofchstrm.org/FortCollins>

- Sept. 1: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
Worship Coordinators, 7:00 p.m.
- Sept. 3: Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 5: Communion and First-Sunday Giving
- Sept. 8: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
Prayer Shawl Group, 1:30 p.m.
- Sept. 10: Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 10–12: RMMC Women's Retreat, Camp Paradise.
- Sept. 12: Two-Cents-a-Meal offering
2nd-Sunday Social: Bowling Party, 5:00 p.m.
- Sept. 15: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 17: Friday Morning Breakfast Club, 8:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 17–19: RMMC Men's Retreat, Camp Paradise
- Sept. 19: Baptismal Service
Communicator items due.
- Sept. 22: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 23: Leadership Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Sept. 24: Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Sept. 24–26: Hunger Challenge
- Sept. 26: Worship with the Hunger Challenge
- Sept. 27: WEAVERS, 7:00 p.m.
- Sept. 29: *Upper Room*, 9:30 a.m.
Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.
- Oct. 1: Meal Site, 11:45 a.m.

Picnic in the Park, THANK YOU!



We missed this in August, so want to be sure and recognize **Sharon Fulton** and **Pat Miner** for a great job organizing our annual picnic in July. Thank you both for your service. Great food, great fun, and a great puppet show.



WEAVERS



Some of the WEAVERS committee members recently viewed the movie *8: The Mormon Proposition*, which was about the Mormon funding of Proposition 8 in California that turned over the court ruling that allowed same sex marriages. It was a very interesting and enlightening film. It will be shown to the community on October 5 at the Lory Student Center at CSU. More information will be shared when it is available. The committee will be sharing the following statement with the sponsors of the film.

A Coalition of Welcoming Faith Communities

We believe that the film *8: The Mormon Proposition* is prima facie evidence why it is important for the church and the state to maintain a separation. For one faith community to impose its perception of right on an entire state and perhaps an entire country, flies in the face of the freedom of each religion to abide by its own faith principles free from the power of control by the

state, or by another religion using the state to control the faith practices of other faiths.

We believe this film provides an opportunity for faith communities in Fort Collins to form a Coalition of Welcoming Faith Communities so that GLBTIQQA persons can find a safe and supporting faith community for them to develop their spirituality and relationship with God.

WEAVERS Committee
Fort Collins Community of Christ

Radical welcome is the spiritual practice of embracing and being changed by the gifts, presence, voices, and power of The Other: the people systemically cast out of or marginalized within a church, a denomination and/or society. . . Radical welcome is concerned with the transformation and opening of individual hearts, congregations and systems so that The Other might find in your community a warm place and a mutual embrace *and* so that you are finally free to embrace and be transformed by authentic relationship with the margins.

—*Radical Welcome*. Stephanie Spellers, pg. 6.



A New West Fest Thank You

Thank you. the water was just what we needed.
The place is very lovely.

—The Shaw/Bowen family

(This was on a crayon drawing left by one of the children. The original will be on the bulletin board.)



If you are receiving this newsletter by e-mail, Thank You! If you are receiving a printed copy and do have e-mail, please consider receiving it by e-mail instead. Not only will you receive it in beautiful color, but you will be saving the congregation between \$.50 and \$.75 the cost of mailing, ink, paper, and labor. It's good stewardship for the earth and for the congregation. And, if you receive it by e-mail and need it printed, you can always print it on your printer and still save money for the congregation.

Thanks for your consideration.

Contact Rich Kohlman:

rkohlman@comcast.net to change to e-mail delivery.

Thanks to Franklin and Jeanne Graybill, and Kathy Graybill for changing to email delivery from the printed copy!



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