Fall Newsletter

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| **Fall 2016****NorthWest Word****orange-leaves-tree.jpg****...North West Association News,****Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ**Like us on facebook: www.facebook.com/nwwaucc                 Dear friends,     The pages of the NW Association newsletters are filled       with glimpses of "shifts" taking place...and now,       here's what's happening!                            "Autumn" blessings,                Mary Jo Laabs and Wendy Dittmann, editors                                      northwword@gmail.com  |

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| **Remembering Who We Are****Rev. Rob MacDougall, Associate Conference Minister****On Sunday, Oct. 30 Hussain Saeed al Nahdi, a twenty four year old Saudi Arabian student studying at UW Stout, was beaten on Main Street in Menomonie, WI. Hussain died the next day from his injuries. As of today there is no public information about who or what lead up to the attack, but the shock of this horrible murder is rocking the Stout and Menomonie communities.****A makeshift memorial has grown on the site of the attack, prominent in the memorial is a sign that simply reads, "This is not who we are." At the memorial ceremony for Hussain, friend after friend talked about the gift of Hussain's friendship, his comical zeal for life and how he built bridges between cultures and worlds.** **His friends spoke through tears saying that Hussain's desire for people was to recognize our shared humanity and to reach out in joy to each other. The young people who spoke were inspiring. Even in their pain, they offered words of hope. Hussain's friends proclaimed "this is who he was and this is who we are!" Our Judeo-Christian faith is, in part, built on our remembering who we are, who God is, what Jesus offered.****One can barely open the Bible and not read words about remembering how God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, about Jacob building a rock pile to remember encountering God, about Ruth remembering her promises, and on and on. Our sacrament of Holy Communion exhorts us to act in remembrance of Jesus so that we might be filled with his love.** **In the most difficult of times, we pray that we will remember who we are and to whom we belong. In the book of Romans, Paul writes: "Repay no evil with evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all." (12:17-18) I am struck by the words, "so far as it depends upon you/me." Paul is making us accountable for what we say and do, not blaming it on what someone else does.****Even in the most difficult of times, when tragedy occurs, when the world seems to have lost its way, we are called to remember who we are and live accordingly. In many conversations, I have heard people wonder what our country will be like following this most contentious election cycle. People are deeply divided, words of hatred have been spoken again and again, trust has broken down and rebuilding trust is a long and skeptical process.****But in all this, what I know is that our faith tells us to remember who we are and to speak and act according to what Jesus taught. "So far as it is up to you/me, repay no evil for evil and live peaceably with all." Some two dozen friends of Hussain saeed al nahdi, in the midst of their grief and anger, remembered who he was and who they are. In the midst of our anxious and angry world, can we, as people of faith, do any less?****Blessings to all on election day and in the weeks and months to follow.****Keep the faith - Rev. Rob MacDougall,****Associate Conference Minister** |

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| **After the fire - Plymouth UCC, Eau Claire**On September twenty second, Plymouth United Church of Christ caught fire from a lightning strike.  The building was completely destroyed, even the sanctuary that they thought might be saved sustained such extensive smoke and water damage has been determined to be a total loss.  Demolition and removal of the building's remains will soon take place and the congregation        will be making decisions based on a vacant piece of property.The loss of the building has been painful; it was a place of vibrant ministry and spiritual history     for its members and community.  Also lost in the fire were many personal belongs, the church's records and important artifacts.  There were no fire proof cabinets in the building, since the fire, many churches have been talking about getting fire proof cabinets to preserve their history and vital records.The leadership of Plymouth Church has been meeting weekly with their pastor, Rev. David Huber, to take steps forward.  Their discussions have moved them to listen for God's calling and gain clarity about their ministry and mission.  Together, they have recognized that this is a new moment in the life of their church and they are wrestling with their future.The congregation is renting office, meeting and worship space at Grace ELCA in Eau Claire.   Pastor David said this is working extremely well.  Plymouth is not the only church renting space at Grace. The Friends Meeting also rents space at the church.  Pastor David said that they have strong insurance coverage and don't have any immediate financial needs.  Because the congregation is just beginning to think about their space needs going forward, they do not know whether they will have financial needs in the future.  However, Pastor David did say they have requests for people  who wish to assist the church: 1. Plymouth has a quilters group that makes quilts for the homeless, all their fabric was destroyed and they would welcome 100% cotton fabric from donors, 2. Plymouth has a night ministry in Eau Claire and the items this ministry offers to assist people were destroyed, as winter approaches this ministry needs donated sleeping  bags, warm socks, winter boots, coats, mittens, hats, scarves  and about 75 small Bibles, 3. Plymouth is also in need of about 50-75 New Century Hymnals if any church has ones that they would want to contribute.  Pastor David said those interested in making donations can contact the church at 715-835-5475, or him at 715-497-8448.As Plymouth grieves the loss of their building they continue to feel and see how God is with them.  They are asking where God is leading and they continue to reach out in love through their ministries of care.  Plymouth UCC is on a journey along an uncharted path.  Let us keep the people                 of Plymouth and Pastor David in our prayers. |

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| **Contact information:****wire-bound-pad.jpg****Rev. Rob MacDougall****Wisconsin Conference****United Church****of Christ****Associate Conference Minister****North West Association****Contact information:  rmacdougall@wcucc.org,****cell: 715-308-6120.** |

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| Good morning, UCCers, I have published a children's chapter book, ***Wakanda Whooper: The Curious Cinnamon Crane.*** Published in March, it is a story told through the eyes of a whooping crane colt and her parents at Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, near Tomah. Visit **wakandawhooper.com**Read more and hear "Wakanda's Song" by an Eau Claire native.  I offer a PowerPoint presentation of species' preservation and caring for God's creation to religious groups. (I also have a shorter one for children  and a secular presentation.)The book is available from me, Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Books a Million, Itasca Books (my warehouse) and Baker and Taylor (a discount for classrooms) at $19.95. If I present, I will sign books afterwards. The book is geared to grade school children, 8-12, but teachers have read it to younger children, and **adults are loving the whooper history**. It is classified as historical fiction because the birds talk. :-)The back of the book has "Wakanda's Song," coloring pages, places in Wisconsin to visit, a glossary of terms and words, and a whooper trivia section. Several environmental quotes by Aldo Leopold and others are section dividers.I use a pen name, **Sandia Kosmo.** I would be happy to speak to any group free with the understanding that I can sell the books afterwards.Thank you,**Rev. Sandee D. Kosmo**    Pastor,  part-time, Grace Lutheran        Communities       Eau Claire C:\Users\Wendy\Desktop\News from Northwest Wisconsin Association UCC_files\1b510b99-4439-49ca-8bed-24a19ab33d45.jpg |

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| soup_kitchen_volunteers.jpg**Is your congregation          supporting a homeless shelter ministry?**The **Lamplight Concert**is a resource to raise funds for homeless shelters.  Kate Jennings and Judith Permann will come to your church and community free of charge and perform a benefit concert.**There are free dates!**If you would like to schedule this wonderful concert on the theme of "Home," contact them  at 715.684.3942or at [lamplightproject.org](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001ofHq_h8v0s8ziauBQA5OttT0eWpaaFIFS37RxLSiCdHlGLBjbLzHOFDK50Fy3ChIpPu8aB0WvyEFzu079RzmkRfJDwmuZhl-365hhiZl0LHPhmYIgYwa3zCxzaC0qXn3ZtrkT9WHRYXSREx476Un8-6PNcucVqq5JvRY9xxSvrfGxhBYcM1eQA==&c=&ch=)  This ministry is being sponsored by First Congregational United Church of Christ, River Falls. |

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| **Do you have the best idea ever?****...something to announce?****...an invitation to extend?****...a project** **to share?****...need a hand?**little-boy-guitar.jpgPlease submit articles for the next edition of the NW Word to northwword@gmail.com  |

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| ***Sacred Journey******To Israel-                          Palestine*****April 20-30, 2017*****men-playing-holi.jpg*** Since 2004, Fitchburg Memorial UCC and the Southwest Association have had a partnership with Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem.  Our partnership was created to provide an opportunity to learn about and connect with our sisters and brothers who live in this sacred place and who struggle to live out their faith in the face of occupation and oppression.  Since 2004 we have traveled to Israel/Palestine eight times and we have hosted people from that region in our churches and our Conference.  In 2014, the Conference Board of Directors approved a Conference wide partnership committee so that churches throughout the Conference could learn about and participate in the partnership. This region, often referred to as the "holy land," is the cradle of all three Abrahamic religions  (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).  It is a place of sacred sites and sacred stories; it is also an incredibly complex place socially, culturally, and politically.  In April 2017, we will be taking another "sacred journey to Israel-Palestine" as part of our partnership and we invite you to consider traveling with us to see the holy sites of our tradition and to meet with people we call the "living stones" of our faith. We will begin our trip in the town of Bethlehem where Jesus was born.  We will worship at Christmas Lutheran Church, one of our Global Ministries partners, and meet people who seek to embody Jesus' message and live out God's vision for our lives.  We will sit on the hillside along the Sea of Galilee imagining Jesus teaching his disciples and healing those who came to hear him tell of God's love.  We will walk down steps that take us back over two thousand years to the stone streets where Jesus played as a child in Nazareth.  We will go up to Jerusalem to hear echoes of Jesus' voice as he prayed and wept on the Mount of Olives. We will walk through the streets of the Old City to see the sacred holy sites honored by Christians, Jews, and Muslims. We will try to understand the historical value of this sacred place to all three Abrahamic peoples as well as its claim on them today.  We will visit Hebron, where Abraham and Sarah are buried, now one of the most contentious sites and cities in the holy land. We will dip our feet in the Jordan where Jesus was baptized. We will visit Qumran, the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.  We will stand on the shores of the Dead Sea; we will look out upon the stark landscape of the Judean desert, where ancient ones learned to trust God to carry them to new life.  This trip is not just about seeing sacred sites, however.  This journey will be different from many traditional tourist experiences as we take time for dialogue and relationship-building along the way.  The Holy Land today is a land scarred by walls, checkpoints, hatred, and violence.  It is impossible to visit this land without noticing the conflict and struggling with its affect on the people who live there.  As we travel in the region, we will talk with Palestinians and Israelis who are working to break down those barriers, mend the wounds, and create a more compassionate and just society for themselves and their neighbors.  We will spend time with some of our Global Ministries partners and other organizations and people - Palestinian and Israeli - who are on the 'front lines' of the suffering and the hope of this region.   It is through these people, the "living stones", that we will see what God is doing today in this sacred and troubled land.  Consider joining us for this "sacred journey" to Israel-Palestine.  Be part of a movement to build greater understanding and foundations for peace in this land considered holy by many.+++++++++++ **Our trip is scheduled****for April 20-30, 2017.**  We prefer to keep the group size small (10-15) in order to travel around the area more easily and have more intimate conversations with people we meet.  Deadline for registration is November 1, 2016.  Cost of the trip will be around $3000, based on double occupancy.   For more information or to sign up, contact Bonnie Van Overbeke at bonnievano@aol.comor 608-274-1859.  ***A word of caution*** This is not a bus tour trip.  We will, indeed, do a lot of walking on uneven pavement, sometimes for a couple hours at a time.  We stay in Guest Houses and local hotels; participants must carry their own luggage. Travelers must be in good physical shape. |

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| **...bits and pieces:****~Hope UCC,** **Cochrane:****As people of faith,****we are called to create beauty****and nourishment****for all those around us.****W****e are named "Apostles"****that we will speak of Christ in the way that****we interact with others.****The statements that we make through our words****and actions invite others****to be who God calls them****to be,****as well.****Imagine****a world****of healing and health,****of beauty****and brilliance,****and a world that praises God through****its very being.****~** **Pastor Colleen**called to create beaut**~Nekoosa UCC:**Members of the Nekoosa UCC have been planting milkweed, raising caterpillars and releasing Monarch butterflies for the last couple years. I have two left to hatch and release and I'll be an empty nester for another year! Safe travels my little friends!                        ~Pastor Tim First Congregational UCC,LaCrosse... celebrated the Sundays in September; September 11 was Renewal Sunday, kicking off the school year, September 18th was Heritage Sunday, recognizing the different generations       of our membership, and on September 25th the church was blessed by the next installment of Eric Heukeshoven's "artist in residence" composition. He is basing his new music on the cornerstone quotation in the church sanctuary: "Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action" (1st John).  That's a very UCC quote, so he's calling it,          "Song of Mission"      (God is Still Speaking).    |

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| **Welcome, New Pastors!**

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**With gratitude and thanksgiving,****we welcome these persons****into the ministry and life of God's church****in the North West Association****of the WI Conference,****United Church of Christ:** **+ Congregational UCC, Sparta, celebrted the installation** **of their new minister, Rev. William Clyma.****+ First Congregational UCC, Menomonie-****called Rev Kathleen Remund who began serving****September 27, 2016.****+ Congregational UCC, Ladysmith - Rev. Wendy Summers****finishes her interim ministry.****The congregation continues its search.** **+ Ely Memorial, Land O Lakes/Congregational UCC, Phelps -    have set a candidating Sunday in November****for their new pastor.****+ First Congregational UCC, La Crosse - Rev. Dan Geslin****will conclude his interim ministry with them on Nov 20,****the church is nearing a decision on a new pastor****+ Congregational UCC, Osseo - Rev. JoBeth Marshall****began her interim ministry with them in September.****The church is beginning its pastoral search****+ First Congregational UCC, Rhinelander -****Gary Wilner has begun his interim ministry with them.****The church is just beginning its pastoral search.****+ Peace UCC, Schofield - have set a candidating Sunday****for their new pastor.****+ First Congregational UCC, WI Rapids****has called Rev. Missy Holdorf to be their new pastor.****She begins January 1, 2017.****Please keep in your prayers the following churches that are "searching:"****Land O Lakes/Phelps****Ladysmith****Roberts****Schofield****Medford****La Crosse (First Congregational)****HoChunk** |

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| ***C:\Users\Wendy\Desktop\News from Northwest Wisconsin Association UCC_files\115e8e5b-e6cb-453e-b7e5-ea87c5dc2fed.png***Thank you, NW AssociationCongregations, for sending your newslettersto northwword@gmail.com Wendy and I (Mary Jo) read each of them and choose articles that we think might inspire and encourage us all as members and friends of the UCC in NW Wisconsin! If you would like specific news items or announcements highlighted, please let us know!  |

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| Dear Friends in Spirit, Wisdom keepers. Story tellers. Sages. Elderly. Positive statements about the last third of life. Not old. Not antiquated or out-of-date. Not out-of-touch. But holders of a family or community's story. A piece of history. We are blessed at St. John's with a population of elders. While some may look at our graying-haired congregation and question its future, I look out and see the richness of these life stories and the wisdoms that come through adversity, vulnerability, loss, acceptance, grace. Winter grace. A recent issue of my primary Christian devotional, Weavings, focused on "eldering." Let me share a few quotes: Eldering is a way of carrying oneself in the world that shows the scars and the mystery of healing. Eldering makes visible the weathering of love, how it softens, and strengthens at the same time. Eldering is the skin of faith over time. ~ Mary L. Fraser Why should we be grateful that we are perceived to be younger than we really are? Why would we want to hide the marks of experience, the lines of wisdom, or the signs that we carry in our flesh of the journey we have traveled through this mortal life? ~ John Van De Laar Silence is the gateway to listening, the threshold that opens us to and allows embrace of what is real, beyond ideals and illusions that we often confuse with wisdom. Eldering depends on the quality of the silences we cultivate at the heart of our listening ­­­ within ourselves and in one another. ~ Mark S. Burrows I believe the story of our faith provides a model for wisdom: the concept of elders and mentoring, nurturing the generation beneath us. I worry we are accepting the devaluing of that role, rather than committing to it with a young person, investing in their struggles and questions, listening deeply. The connections will come if we listen first. I heard a story at a funeral today about how one Island elder spent a whole day with a young student...they found connection, they took time, they resisted stereotypes of the young or the old. Isaiah and Samuel had mentors. Mary sought out Elizabeth. Jesus had mentors in Joseph and Mary and uncles and aunts and rabbis, even a cousin. Jesus mentored friends and strangers. Let us pray for those who mentored us as we began to walk this sacred journey of life. Let us pray that we may be humble enough to listen to the next generation rather than dismiss them. Let us be clear on the wisdoms that helped us through the dark times. Let us be the light for someone. Amen. In peace, Pastor MarinaSt John's UCC, LaPointe |

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| **North West Association****Pulpit Supply List as of September 2016** Churches should be fair and forthright in agreeing upon honorarium and travel expenses for persons  they invite to provide pulpit supply. The Conference Commission on Church and Ministry suggests a minimum of $125 plus mileage reimbursed at the IRS current rate (for 2016, that would be 54 cents per mile). Where the parish has two points, you should consider a minimum of $175 where there is a second service.  Conference staff persons serve the local congregations in a variety of ways in the normal performanceof their duties. Honoraria are not accepted, and travel costs are covered by the Conference travel budget. Except in emergencies, Conference staff cannot provide pulpit supply; however, the staff welcomes opportunities to preach for special occasions or to meet members of the congregation. Please note: Persons licensed to the NW Association and ordained pastors are authorized to administer the Sacraments. **EAU CLAIRE TO TWIN CITIES AREA:EAU CLAIRE****TO TWIN CITIES AREA:** Rev. Elizabeth Hazel,  1060 Marian Lane, Park Falls, WI 54552   (willing to drive 3 hours)715-744-2373          morrinhazel@pctcnet.netRev. Carol J. Heckmann, 1789 County Road E E, White Bear Lake, MN 55110651-269-4950 cj.heckmann@yahoo.com  Rev. Jeanny House,  1342 Glenn Place #2, Eau Claire, WI 54703.715-577-5542      jeannyh@fastmail.fm Rev. Sandee Kosmo,  3214 Chasewood Lane, Eau Claire, 54701715-834-2112       skosmo14@msn.com  Rev. Norm Luecke, Bruce, WI (willing to travel 2 hours)925-639-1652     normluecke@yahoo.com Rev. Dick Olmsted, 613 Spruce Drive, Hudson 54016 715-531-0374        drolmsted@gmail.com  Stephen P. Ottman,  733 First Street, Plum City 54761 715-647-3501 h   715-495-2017 cell     s\_ottman@hotmail.com  Barry Tulkki, 140 Arch Street, Amery WI 54001 715-268-8997 home          651-303-7975 cell   barrytulkki@gmail.com Rev. Charles Wolfe, 715-441-7362 almawi46@gmail.com **SUPERIOR-ASHLAND AREA**: Deanne Allen, 14240 S. Riverside Road, Cable, WI  54821715-798-5097           woodyspirit@gmail.comPastor Gary Gilbert, Licensed to the NW Association , 2051 Pinewood Drive, P.O. Box 1921, Eagle River, WI 54521715-479-2908 home        garygilbert41@charter.net      Bill Handy, 715-682-0168Rev. Elizabeth Hazel, 1060 Marian Lane, Park Falls, WI 54552    (willing to travel 3 hours)715-744-2373             morrinhazel@pctcnet.net       John Thompkins, johnval@reagan.com, 1-715-372-4543. Rev. Donald B. King, W7995 Perkinstown Ave.,  Medford, WI 54451      715-785-7635      sdking@tds.net               Rev. Norm Luecke               Bruce, WI (willing to travel 2 hours)925-639-1652        normluecke@yahoo.comRev Bob Rice, robertsrice@msn.com, 405-642-6118        (Eagle River area)**LA CROSSE AREA:** Rev. Betsy Miller-Ruben, millerru@triwest.net, 608-534-6043Rev. Mark Stahlhut, 2106 West Ave. S,  La Crosse WI 54601608-298-3181 or (608) 440-9200 (cell)      mstahlhut@msn.com                  Rev.Tom Uphaus, 2650 N Pine Creek Rd, La Crescent, MN 55947507-895-2152           tuphaus@acegroup.cc                                       **WAUSAU AREA:** Rev. Dale Bishop, 511 Sundstein Rd., Eagle River, WI 54521715-479-1152         dbishop511@frontier.com                                       Rev. Don Baumann, 2202 Zimmerman Street, Wausau, WI 54403715 571-6329     donbfishing@gmail.com        Rev. Wayne C. Drueck, 1811 Perry Drive, Schofield, WI 54476715-355-8895 home 715-212-8376 cell harleyrev@gmail.com Rev. Emerson Coy, PO Box 67, Lac du Flambeau, WI  54538715-588-3487   ecoy@ldftribe.com                       Rev. John Eldred (UMC), 4403 North Lakeshore Dr,  Wausau 54401 715-359-5078 home or 715-370-6822 cell               bramblyhill@yahoo.com Pastor Gary Gilbert, Licensed to the NW Association2051 Pinewood Drive, P.O. Box 1921, Eagle River, WI 54521715-479-2908 home       garygilbert41@charter.net      Rev. Elizabeth Hazel, 1060 Marian Lane,   Park Falls, WI 54552, (willing to travel 3 hours)715-744-2373      morrinhazel@pctcnet.net                   Rev. Donald B. King, W7995 Perkinstown Ave.  Medford, Wi 54451   715-785-7635         sdking@tds.net                           Rev. Norm Luecke,   Bruce, WI (willing to travel 2 hours)925-639-1652      normluecke@yahoo.com                                 Rev. James Mohr,  35 Hewett St., Neillsville WI 54456715-743-7626        jmohr@tds.net                    \*Note: I would be available to drive to any place        South of Wausau,  East of La Crosse, and SE of Eau Claire.Rev Bob Rice, robertsrice@msn.com, 405-642-6118     (Eagle River area)Susan Stein, 3321 16th Street South,  Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494   608-515-4491         synergize10@hotmail.com              Rev. Pat Tucker, 511 Sundstein Rd.,  Eagle River, WI 54521715-479-1152       ptucker511@frontier.com                                 Mary Wright, bmw@tznet.com, 715-325-3602 |

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| **Northwest Association 2017****Per Capita Information**As fall begins, congregations in our association start the vital work of budget planning for 2017. As part of that effort, the Northwest Association Executive Committee is sending this quick reminder of the change in the per capita amount to $4.50 per member. This amount was proposed by an attendee at the annual conference this spring and was unanimously approved. Please share this information with your board or committee responsible for budget preparation if you have not already done so.A letter and advanced statement for 2017 will be mailed to the Pastor and Treasurer of all NW Association churches in November with more detail about the per capita support. However, we wanted to provide a reminder to congregations in advance for those who start the budgeting process earlier.For those congregations who have faithfully submitted your 2016 per capita support - thank you! That contribution sustains so many important ministries all year long. A courtesy reminder will be sent in November to congregations who have not yet completed their per capita support for 2016.It is a pleasure to provide ministries on behalf of all NW Association congregations. Our combined support reinforces strong and vibrant opportunities for spiritual growth, learning, and outreach.**Thank you again for your discipleship in support****of the Northwest Association of the Wisconsin United Church of Christ! Blessings to you all -****Ken Snart, Moderator****Carrie Fisher, Treasurer** |

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| **...more bits and pieces:****~First Congregational UCC,** **River Falls ...designates articles in its newsletter** **with these headings:****Core Values:** ***As Jesus' courageous disciples,******living God's grace, we strive to:******~ Worship faithfully******~ Welcome openly******~ Grow spiritually******~ Care passionately******~ Serve generously******No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!*****Thank you for your inspiration!****~St Paul UCC, Ellsworth:****...is going through the SHIFT. Here are some "Shifts" you might feel, hear and smell this fall. First, coming to a church near you, namely,          St. Paul's UCC, we will now be offering coffee       to all those who would like to gather a little earlier before Worship. So... If you'd prefer to gather with a group of your best friends or you'd simply like to sit and sip for bit (by yourself) while your children are in Sunday School, please stop by our brand new Keurig station for a cup of yummy coffee.  This will be located in our foyer upstairs****fo** **r your sipping pleasure. Hopefully, in time,****other fun beverages will be added, as well.****~Community UCC, Medford:****...sponsored a "Lamplight Concert" to benefit "Stepping Stones,"a "haven" for those who have lived with domestic or sexual abuse and those who are homeless.****~Prescott UCC:**Upon a suggestion from a member of the congregation, the Prescott UCC is considering the possibility of the congregation raising an extra $240 each month to support one refugee family (among the 60 million refugees which the United Nations estimates to be in our world at the moment) presently residing in a refugee camp.~Trinity UCC,La Crosse:... has a new look. This past month, our beautiful mid-century modern building has undergone a stunning transformation: new hardwood flooring in the narthex and office, new carpeting in the sanctuary, library, and cry room, fresh paint, and many other improvements have revitalized our space while staying true to the  architectural integrity of the building and the needs of our congregation!  The truth is though, none of these improvements would be worth much if they didn't serve our mission in the world - these do!  By creating a space that is comfortable, functional, and beautiful, we position ourselves to do the important work of hospitality.~First Congregational UCC,  Menomonie: ... is continuing the Sunday School and Wednesday night programming for children  and youth; adding vocal and bell choir rehearsals; Progressive Christian discussion. The Men's Inner Life Group and Thursday Table have been joined by a Mindfulness group, offering a way to be a compassionate presence to yourself and to others, and a book discussion based on Bruce Fischer's book, "Rebuilding: When Your Relationship Ends." The book offers insights into healing and going on with living life in a positive way after the loss of a significant love relationship. |

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