

## OCWM: THERE IS SOMEONE TO CALL

*The Rev. Bill Utke, pastor of Emanuel UCC Hales Corners, kindly shared this letter that he wrote to his congregation describing the resources available as a result of contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission.*

### WHAT IS OCWM?

OCWM is an acronym for the very foundation of our work in the United Church of Christ. It stands for **Our Church's Wider Mission!** In the UCC it means – **there is always someone to call.** While congregations of the UCC have a great amount of autonomy to form our own styles of worship and how we govern ourselves, even autonomy about some of our beliefs in the Christian Faith; we are UCC and we always have someone to call.

Just as you are a participant at Emanuel Church, Hales Corners, UCC, our congregation is a participant in the Southeast Association and the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ. We even have elected and appointed representatives at the national level.

On a practical level this means that **we always have someone to call** (usually at no extra cost to us). Beyond the abundant resources and abilities we have right here in our own congregation, we have the resources of 219 other UCC congregations in the state of Wisconsin. And beyond that, the nearly 5000 UCC churches across our nation.

### HOW ARE OCWM CONTRIBUTIONS USED?

In addition to the resources of our own and other congregations, **we have the resources of the Wisconsin Conference Staff ([www.wcucc.org](http://www.wcucc.org)), with experienced professional resource people.** For example:

- Here in Southeast Wisconsin, Rev. Jane Anderson is our Associate Conference Minister. She supports the work of the churches in times of transition, celebration and conflict. She is only one call away.
- Need help with church growth, mission, education, stewardship, building projects? Call the Wisconsin Conference.
- Questions about youth and young adult ministry? Lisa Hart is the resource for these ministries in the Wisconsin Conference.
- Want to go to camp or plan a retreat, OCWM supports two Christian camps right here in our own state.

You name it and there are resources to support the local church right here in Wisconsin, and they come to us at no extra cost. **They are like extended staff of our congregation.**

***How is this Possible? Because of Our Church's Wider Mission gifts.*** We are not lone rangers in the UCC – we are a connected, covenanted, collaborative group that supports each other and has resources for the life and challenges of each congregation.

There is always someone to call in the UCC. **This is true at the national level too.**

- Have questions about welcoming transgender people, contact the Open and Affirming Coalition for resources and help.
- Need help responding to a Justice Issue, email the Justice and Witness ministries.
- Want to enhance your local worship service? Contact the Local Church Ministries office. Want to plan a mission trip? Call Rev. Mary Shaller Blaufuss in Cleveland.
- Vitality resources for your church?
- A few minutes on [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) and you will have all the information you need and, what's more, people to help you only a call away. **ALL AT NO EXTRA COST.**

And did you know you can connect to the UCC on Twitter and Facebook, receive an emailed daily devotional or a podcast from the President, Rev. John C. Dorhauer? Get study resources for Sunday's lectionary texts? Have "weekly seeds" sent to your email?

Want to learn about our missionaries and their work around the world? There are updates on the UCC website. All the work of OCWM contributions!

OCWM means there is always someone to call. That feels good. That is worth something. So I invite this church to consider strong and growing support for **Our Church's Wider Mission**. And then sit back, knowing with full confidence that no matter what may happen, we are not alone, **we always have someone to call**.

*To learn about the breadth of resources available to your congregation from the Wisconsin Conference, see the handout "Wisconsin Conference Resources For Congregations" detailing services and expertise provided by the Wisconsin Conference UCC. Also check out all the online resources at [www.wcucc.org](http://www.wcucc.org).*