



All Peoples  
United Church of Christ

# SOJOURNER NEWS

September, 2015

A Central Oregon House Church

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## "TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER" TAKES THE UCC HELM

The 30th General Synod of the UCC elected the Rev. John Dorhauer (*right*) to the position of General Minister and President of the denomination in May.

Filled with a passion for racial justice and author of *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World* (Exploration Press, July, 2015),

John Dorhauer has drawn the attention of the religious community well beyond the UCC.

In a recent interview, Frederick Clarkson of *Religion Dispatches*, (August 20, 2015, a publication of USC-Annenberg) asked John Dorhauer: **In "Beyond Resistance" you say that we are living in the dawning of a "postmodern" age of Christianity**

**that may last for 500 years. What kind of church do you see emerging?"**

Dorhauer's response follows:

"The first thing I want to say about that church is that it is faithful. It is a genuine response to the mission of the church from its beginnings—and that is the proclamation of a gospel that changes lives.

"I lead with this because too many in the church as we know it assume that what they see happening is either a distancing from authentic spirituality, a rebellion against it, or an indifference to it. But this has always been the case for people of faith: some remain distant to the teachings and practices of spiritually engaged communities, some rebel,

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and some are indifferent.

“The mistake made by people of faith regarding postmodernity is this: they see both the deconstruction of enlightenment faith and the experimentation with new ways to express faith as commensurate with abandonment, rebellion, and indifference.

“It is anything but.

“What is emerging is the authentic endeavor of people engaged in spiritual practices and disciplines that they find deeply meaningful. They experience institutional religion as stale, irrelevant, and unable to fulfill their spiritual longings and desires.

“It is too early to be able to identify the exact nature of the emergent church. But I think we can say this much:

“The emerging church is and will be far less committed to a denominational identity than the institutional church. Practitioners won’t find meaning in declaring loyalty to a denomination. They will not only sample the best practices from a variety of Christian traditions, but their spiritual horizons will invite them into a larger spiritual field. If there is a way to encounter the sacred or



*Above: The Rev. John Dorhauer, newly elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ*

the divine, a way to draw closer to nature, a way to engender compassion for humanity, they will give themselves over to it without rejection, judgment, or reservation.

“There will be less reliance on or need for religious experts: namely, full-time, seminary-trained, ordained or authorized clergy.

“Membership” as currently defined by (and  
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deemed essential for) the institutional church will have no meaning in a postmodern, emergent world. People will belong in both an organic and fluid way to those groups or cohorts that provide their lives with meaning, that meet their spiritual hungers, that equip them to encounter the sacred, and that engage them in actions that effect change in the world.

“People may actively participate in two or three such communities of faith. They may stay with one for a while, only to move easily and seamlessly into another for no other reason that it feels right to them.

“They won’t be investing their missional resources of time, talent, and money in building and property, in sanctuaries adorned with stunning Tiffany stained-glass windows and nine-rank pipe organs and mahogany pews. They will meet wherever two or three can gather, and wherever the divine can be encountered they will be open to engaging that space and declaring it sacred.

While much of this will feel awkward, unorthodox, and threatening to the institutional expression of the church it is nonetheless an authentic expression of an

evolving faith that, like all its predecessors, was birthed out of a call to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with the divine—and, like its predecessors, was constantly evolving in order to maintain its relevance in a changing world.”

*(Reprinted with permission)*

Read the full article, “Racial Justice Will Be Top Priority for New Prez of the United Church of Christ,” log onto:

<http://religiondispatches.org/racial-justice-will-be-top-priority-for-new-prez-of-the-united-church-of-christ/>



## **FAITH-BASED SOCIAL PROGRAMS NEED REFORM**

Government (tax-payer funded) partnerships with faith-based social-services providers are headed for reform based upon the joint proposals of 9 agencies. The gist of the reforms should assure that homeless or needy people won’t be kicked out of a homeless shelter or a drug treatment class because they don’t want to pray or listen to preaching. These proposals are generally in line with President Obama’s Executive Order 13559 from 2010.



# EDITOR'S NOTE:

In this issue's lead story, John Dorhauer speaks to some of the questions we at All Peoples have posed quietly to ourselves about our future within the UCC.

- Will the UCC, as a denomination, fully embrace a congregation without church building or ordained pastor?
- What kinds of support/encouragement should a small group of spirit-seeking, community-serving Christians expect from a larger church entity?
- What can our progressive, independent-minded congregation contribute to a regional/national/international denomination?

That President Dorhauer expresses such ideas is affirming. The path that All Peoples has followed has been one of twists and choices with little clarity to see far into the future. As people of faith, we look *back* and reflect, "God IS still speaking."

Still, like so many Biblical figures before us, we doubt, and wonder. What if a lot

of congregations should emerge like ours? What will become of seminary-trained, ordained leadership? Who will ordain them? Will we count on mass media to raise up true prophetic voices for us to follow? Who will nurture children and youth toward adult paths of faith and service? Where will the funding come from to serve the needy on a wider basis? It would not take long for our thoughtful group to add to these questions with more wisdom than this editor brings to the issues.

Oh, we of little faith! Embracing doubt and wonder must become part of our faith journeys.

Remember, Moses told God... don't call me; take my brother Aaron. As in many other faith stories, God's call is often met with reluctance and humility.

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At this time of fundamental change in the institutional church, it is right to dwell on questions of long term faith even as we work in our contemporary vineyards to serve the needy, heal the sick and follow in the footsteps of the disciples.

We may feel unprepared to contemplate futures that we are unlikely to live long enough to experience. We **are** called to care for future generations in whatever ways we can and then trust that God will still be speaking in the coming days. ▲

cost is fully affordable.

Yet, attempts to privatize Social Security and establish private individual **investment**

accounts within the system threaten

Social Security's financial health and propose replacement of Social Security's current guarantee of retirement income with a risky system dependent on personal investment wisdom, and the timing of the stock market. (Edith Rasell, UCC/JJWM)

For the national UCC report on the plight of aging Americans, see the following website:

[http://www.ucc.org/honoring\\_our\\_commitment\\_to\\_the\\_dignity\\_of\\_older\\_americans?utm\\_campaign=jpanet\\_aug6\\_15&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=unitedchurchofchrist#stats](http://www.ucc.org/honoring_our_commitment_to_the_dignity_of_older_americans?utm_campaign=jpanet_aug6_15&utm_medium=email&utm_source=unitedchurchofchrist#stats)



*"Even when you are old, I will take care of you. Even when you have gray hair, I will carry you. I made you and I will support you; I will carry you and rescue you."* – Isaiah 46:4

## **UCC's COMMITMENT TO HONORING AND PROTECTING THE ELDERLY**

Social Security (1935), Medicare and Medicaid and the Older American's Act (1965) are under political threat these days. The UCC has committed to join in protecting these laws from political adventurers.

Social Security is a **social insurance** that provides guaranteed retirement income, disability insurance, and income to the survivors of deceased workers. It is **not an investment income**. The Soc.Sec.'s most recent annual report to Congress stated that the program is not in crisis and its future

## **APUCC RESPONDS TO CANYON CREEK WILDFIRE LOSSES**

The forest fires burning around the state have created hardship for many. The two fires nearest to APUCC have been the County Line2 Complex to the north and the Canyon Creek Complex to the east. Hundreds of firefighters are at work on both fires. While the County Line 2 has destroyed four residences to date, recent reports indicate that tribal resources appear to be helping those homeowners toward recovery.

To our east, the Canyon Creek wildfire complex south and east of John Day reports more than 40 residences burned down to date, with 50 more sustaining damage. By 9/1/15, a total of 104,741 acres had gone up in smoke and the fire was judged to be only 49% contained. All Peoples decided to send money to help our neighbors with their losses.

In keeping with our mission to aid community needs, the congregation took up an offering to send to the wildfire relief fund established at the Old West Federal Credit Union in John Day. The Credit Union CEO has gathered a community group to disburse

funds as best they can to serve the needs of those who have lost homes, shops and more. Our prayers go out to all who are caught in this tragedy... including the firefighters throughout the Pacific Northwest.

## **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE**

On a lighter note, July's "Last-Monday-of-the-Month" gathering (*below, right*) met at the new home of Moderator Gloria Olson and her housemate Carol Carlson. Carol organized a surprise birthday celebration. She crowned Gloria "Birthday Queen" (*below*). Notes of appreciation and fun added to the festivities. Twenty-one APUCCers and well-wishers filled the home to overflowing; laughter, great food and best wishes filled the air. Special thanks go to Carol Carlson for her amazing skill in organizing the surprise party.



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Above—Final preparations of the spread at Gloria Olson's party.

Toward the close of the frivolity, the congregation voted to match the \$542 of wildfire relief money collected with funds from the church treasury making a total of more than \$1,000 for wildfire relief. **THE FUND STAYS OPEN FOR DONATIONS UNTIL AFTER WORSHIP, ON SUNDAY.** ▲

## APUCC VOLUNTEERS SERVE

September Jericho Table servers:

Sept. 7th Labor Day—Closed

Sept. 14th Bill & Pris Hardin

Sept. 21st Gerry & Ed Soto

Sept. 28th David & Nancy Cook

Questions?

Call Melanie

Feilzer

503-330-3164

## OUR ANNUAL MEETING REPS.

We will have three delegates to the conference annual meeting—Sept. 25–27. Nancy Cook, Pris Hardin and Sue Sutton will carpool to Pendleton to represent All Peoples United Church of Christ!

## AGING AND SPIRITUALITY NETWORK COMING

Don Paine—Eugene UCC and Dave Rozell—Ainsworth UCC are spearheading a campaign to form an Aging and Spirituality network within the Central Pacific Conference. At least 3 congregations and 10 people must sign on to make such a network a part of the CPC structure. Working with the aging might well be a part of APUCC's future. Stan or David are eager to talk with us about joining in mission to serve the needs of aging folks. ▲

## SEPTEMBER WORSHIP PLANS

All Peoples UCC meets to worship the first and third Sundays of the month at 11 a.m. Bible study meets from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Worship will be in Redmond at St. Charles Hospital's Juniper Room.

### FINDING ST. CHARLES HOSPITAL IN REDMOND

- **From the north**—From Hwy 97 reroute in Redmond, right on Larch; first left on Canal, right on Kingwood, 3rd right into parking lot.
- **From the south**—coming north on Redmond Hwy 97 reroute, exit left at Glacier, right on 5th all the way north through town to Kingwood, right on Kingwood, go 1.75 blocks, and turn left into the hospital parking lot.
- **From east or west** on Hwy 126, go north on 5th and follow south-side directions.
- **Finding the Juniper Room**—Enter at the main entrance or the next door on the left. Go left to the end of the hall and then right to the first room on left, opposite the rest rooms.



## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Sept. 6th—**

- 11 a.m. Worship by Liz Douville
- 10 a.m. Discussing Chapter 9 of *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor—Nancy Cook leading.

**Sept. 20th**—ANNUAL WORSHIP/POT LUCK & MEETING at Hardin's home\*  
11 a.m. Worship leader: Laurie Power  
**NO BIBLE BOOKWORMS** this week

\*Email [prisbill@earthlink.net](mailto:prisbill@earthlink.net) for a map

### SOJOURNER NEWS

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Please join us every first and third Sunday.  
Worship is at 11 a.m.; discussion group at 10 a.m.

For additional information and location/date  
of the next worship service,  
email the above.

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