

# *Elkhart Christian Church*

(Disciples of Christ)

**October 2011**

## **Pastoral Thoughts on the Death Penalty**

Today, as I write, is the International Day of Peace, something our national denomination observes.

You've heard me pray week after week for peace in the world—especially in those places where there is outright war. And we've prayed together for an end to violence in our own country.

I have a heavy heart today, because a man is set to be executed this evening in Georgia. His name is Troy Davis, and he was convicted 22 years ago for the shooting death of a police officer.

But even after all this time, there is reasonable doubt about his guilt. Hundreds of thousands of people all over the world, including the Pope, former President Jimmy Carter, and a former director of the FBI, have spoken supporting him. People on both sides of the political aisle in this country are asking for a stay of execution.

It doesn't look as though it will work this time.

But I think I would have a heavy heart anyway. I'm thinking about the Gospel of Matthew, which we've been studying this lectionary year, and what it tells me about the death penalty.

Matthew tells about John the Baptist, who was imprisoned for offending the state. In his case, he spoke the truth about Herod's marriage to his brother's wife. And then John was executed by the state—and any reader can see that he was an innocent man.

Then, of course, we see how Jesus was arrested, tortured, and executed by the state. And any reader can see that he was an innocent man.

I know Christians of deep faith and of good will disagree on the death penalty—whether the accused is innocent or guilty. But I have a heavy heart today.

In blessings and prayer,  
Anne

## **Come and Worship**

Chancel Choir: 8:00 am - September through May

Sunday School: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Labor Day until last Sunday before Memorial Day

Gathering: 9:15 am-Sunday School Classes:9:30 am

Worship Service 10:30 am

Handchime Rehearsal: 4:00 pm - September through May

Men's Breakfast: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month-Sept. through June: 7:30 am

Fellowship: Immediately after worship

## **Worship Attendance and Offering**

|       | Att. | Offering   | S.S. Offering |
|-------|------|------------|---------------|
| 08/28 | 57   | \$1,283.74 |               |
| 09/4  | 47   | \$1,428.45 |               |
| 09/11 | 68   | \$2,251.94 | \$ 13.84      |
| 09/18 | 67   | \$1,400.13 | \$ 17.21      |
| 09/25 | 52   | \$1,383.64 | \$ 6.00       |
| 10/2  | 46   | \$1,328.18 |               |

Christmas Offering: \$ 60.00

Week of Compassion: \$ 35.00

Pentecost: \$ 35.00

Reconciliation: \$ 27.97

## **Mission Statement**

Elkhart Christian Church is a family of faithful Christians actively caring for the needs of others; sharing our faith through worship, education, and outreach; and providing fellowship that represents Christ's love and presence in our community and our world. Our mission is to nurture and prepare everyone God entrusts to us to become mature and dedicated Disciples for the glory of God.

If you have information for the weekly church bulletin or monthly newsletter, or if you would like to have your birthday printed and it is not already on the list, please place it in the secretary's mailbox, email it to [eccsecretary@windstream.net](mailto:eccsecretary@windstream.net) or contact Mary Jo at the church office.

(515) 367-5125. **Please note new email address.**

Note: Elkhart Christian Church has a Website:

<http://elkhart-christianchurch.com>

## Transitions

**Viola W. Struthers**

January 12, 1912—September 14, 2011

### **Free Babysitting** **Elkhart Christian Church Youth Group**

The Youth Group will be providing free babysitting on Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup> so that parents can go Christmas shopping. The hours will be from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the church for kids 8 years old and younger. Bring your child/children for all or part of the 6 hours along with a snack or sack lunch for them. Space could be limited. In case of bad weather it will be moved to Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup> same times as above.

### **Annual Bazaar & Dinner**

Save the Date! October 22 is the date for the annual Bazaar and Roast Beef dinner. There will be crafts and white elephant tables organized by Cathy Handley. There will be a bake sale table too! Sue Owen is in charge of the Roast Beef dinner – If you can help with any of this, please contact one of the ladies listed above! Many hands make light work! Cathy: 964-2544 or Sue: 367-3465.

### **Cookies!**

Do you need cookies for a special occasion? Do you have an event you need to take a dessert and don't have time to bake? Arlys to the rescue! Call Arlys Hall at 367-2812 – and she will fix you right up. She is charging \$4.00 per dozen and profits will go to the church general fund. Don't have a special occasion, call her and have a cookie for yourself!

## **News from the Upper Midwest Region:**

### **All Congregational Gathering - October 15, 2011**

September 14, 2011 by Connie Derby Dicks

The 1st annual Congregational Gathering will be Saturday, October 15, 2011, at the West Des Moines Christian Church. We will

experience our new way of doing ministry together in the Upper Midwest Region.

**Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister & President** will be there to share in this new beginning. She will also preside over **the installation of Bill Spangler-Dunning.**

During the day congregations and clergy will share ministry ideas, encourage common ministries to arise in the group, commission ministries for the next year, and choose a **representative Operations Council.**

There will be a potluck lunch (the Region will supply the drinks and meat). To REGISTER: Simply call or email the Regional office at 515-255-3168 or [cddumw@gmail.com](mailto:cddumw@gmail.com)

### **Thoughts from Joan Chittister, OSB**

#### **Do It Now**

As for us, our days are like grass;  
We flower... the wind blows...  
We are gone.  
– Psalm 103

The psalmist speaks out of a social situation from which our generation and culture need to learn: To the psalmist life is temporary, fragile, daily “redeemed from the grave.” Survival is a matter of massive human effort and natural hardship. The land to be cultivated is desert; water is scarce; foliage is sparse and scrawny and fragile. Every day life is a blessing of mammoth proportions.

But now we take life for granted. We feel invulnerable. Therefore, we lose sight of the brief gift of time and our needs. We know better the needs and weaknesses of others than of our own.

We act as if we’re here forever. We spend time as if we have nothing but time. We fritter away the great things of life: gospel commitments, family, prayer, nature, responsibility for play and things that serve ourselves—ambition, clothes, consumption.

We think we have forever. We’ll do what we have to do later: we’ll reconcile “later;” we’ll settle down “later;” we’ll pray “later;” we’ll get some order in our lives “later;” we’ll study the nuclear thing, the economic thing, the racism thing, the sexism thing, “later.” After we get finished with the very important things we’re doing now.

Nevertheless, today we too have been “redeemed from the grave.” The question is “Why?” Whatever the reason: do it now.

from: *Songs of the Heart: Reflections on the Psalms*. Published 2011

Joan Chittister is a Benedictine abbess and internationally known speaker and writer.

**International Day of Peace: September 21, 2011**  
**A Prayer from Tanzania**  
**Shared with us by DOC Global Ministries**

Our Lord and God Almighty,

we praise you,  
for you created us all and made us  
into many different tribes and nations,  
that we may befriend one another  
and that we may not despise each other.

Open our hearts, we pray,  
so that we may respond to the needs  
of all our brothers and sisters.

Oh Lord Jesus, bless all our lands  
with more lasting peace and fraternal understanding.

Above all, heavenly Father,  
touch the hearts of our political leaders  
and all those in power.

We pray that they may exercise power gently,  
that they may humbly seek a disinterested dialogue  
that will bring about understanding,  
leading us all to a place where all nations and all people  
live together in peace and harmony.

Where there is bitterness teach us forgiveness and reconciliation,  
replace hatred with love and indifference with care.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*By Aneth Lwakatare*

*"Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me."*

JOHN 14:1

## Living and Learning in a Troubled World

Uskudar American Academy in Uskudar, Turkey is an historic mission school founded by missionaries in 1873 during the Ottoman Empire. Today it is a secular private school that strives to prepare students for a rapidly changing multicultural, multilingual, and religiously diverse world. Missionary Alison Stendahl has been working with the school for a number of years. She reflects: any school is a subset of its surrounding world, where its diverse community members learn to understand one another even in the face of conflict and disagreement. When a community truly and sincerely cares for its members, it can be a nurturing place where one should feel safe. Turkey borders a region caught up in strong social and political forces. The more the region destabilizes, the greater the effects on Turkey as it braces itself for an influx of refugees. We are particularly aware of how immense social pressure can eventually focus people on their differences rather than their commonalities. We focus on those who strive to build bridges of understanding rather than to construct walls of fear.

Uskudar American Academy has one of the most respected Model United Nations conferences where 500 high school students from various countries come together in a forum to seriously examine the major issues facing this geographic region. Dedicated to preparing students for an increasingly intertwined and complex world, Uskudar American has a strong vision for the future and is also a supportive and caring community. Though the vast number of teachers and students are Muslim, several are also from Christian and Jewish backgrounds. Together this diverse community models how a common vision can give its members energy to strive for a better and more positive future.

We pray for students, who through social service projects, do what they can to help those who have needs beyond their imagining. We pray for teachers who work with the youth, as they explore what it truly means to be a global citizen in today's world.

*Alison Stendahl serves the Near East Mission in Istanbul. She works as academic dean and math teacher at Uskudar American Academy.*



ALISON  
STENDAHL



## You make the difference...

The prayers and help you provide through your local congregations make possible the work and witness of GLOBAL MINISTRIES, which is supported by Disciples Mission Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) of the United Church of Christ.

## October

02 Alan Brazelton  
    Scott Durrell  
    Julie Owen  
03 Kathy Warrington  
    Steve Snyder  
05 Nancy Owen  
    Nathan Dobson  
    Linda Brazelton  
07 Jim Elmore  
    Don Swartout  
08 Steve Albaugh  
09 Galen Freel  
    Jay Mathis  
    Renee Lamfers  
    Dustin Bussanmas  
    Kalven Owen  
10 Tony Thompson  
    Ronald Cory  
11 Jill Reinke  
12 Gavin Cory  
13 Brandon Cory  
    Kristina Smith  
14 Jacob Van Gorp  
15 David Spratt  
    Eric Bean  
16 Andy Hall  
18 Lane Hill  
20 Gloria Elmore  
22 Bill McLean  
    Donna Spratt  
    Brent Bean  
    Sharon Reinertson  
24 Mike Olesen  
25 Barb Angstead  
26 Ashley Owen  
27 Richard  
    Higginbottom  
29 Maxine Owen

## November

02 Russell Sandquist  
06 Mark Jamison  
    Mark Long  
07 Mark Birchmier  
09 Bonnie Freel  
10 Leslie King  
13 Cole Thompson  
14 Laura Butler  
15 Tim Butler  
16 Charlotte Dawson  
20 Sydney Anderson  
21 Jayne Higginbottom  
    Chad Martin  
23 Robert Ault  
25 Richard Miller  
27 Bob Voshell  
    Shawn Romick  
    Leslie Cory  
28 Theb Vogt  
29 Dorothy Mathis  
    Braedynn Batson

## December

02 Jerry Sorenson  
03 Phyllis Cohee  
04 Pam Oldham  
06 Irline Capehart  
07 Megan Albaugh  
    Michael Kaltenheuser  
08 Charles Campbell  
    Paul Sorenson  
    Mary Jo Ward  
10 John Owen  
    Joyce Russell  
    Jared Rodriguez  
    Jacob Rodriguez

Elkhart Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
124 S. Washington  
P.O. Box 97  
Elkhart, IA 50073  
(5125) 367-5125

### Church Staff

Ministers: The Congregation  
Pastor: Rev. Anne E. Gregory  
Board Chair: Dave Kalsem  
Church Sec.: Mary Jo Ward  
Pianists: Brenda Dobson  
            Robin Luke  
Organist: Sharon Payne

## "Sharing Our Faith and God's Love"

"Address Service Requested"  
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