

# Woodside World

NEWS of CONGREGATION and COMMUNITY

*Joyfully Defiant for the Sake of a Just World*

a Congregation of the United Church of Christ, the Alliance of Baptists, and the American Baptist Churches

## IN OUR CONGREGATION

**SHARING COMPASSION.** We desire to stay in touch with our incarcerated friends, but writing to strangers can be awkward at best, and even moreso when we don't understand their situation. Thankfully, we are not alone. April 14 after worship, we'll get coaching from our community partner, Leon El-Alamin of the M.A.D.E. Institute. Plan to stay after worship. Our letters and cards can make a difference.

**THE WAYS WE HELP.** Woodside's "minister's discretionary fund" allows us to assist folks at tenuous times in their lives -- with rent, water or heat, medical expenses, transportation and things we can't predict. The fund is low. If you are able to make a special gift, just mark it "discretionary" and drop it by the office or in the offering plate. And know that it does a world of good.

## IN OUR DENOMINATION

**LEADERSHIP UPDATE.** We have learned that the American Baptist Churches USA General Secretary Rev. Lee Spitzer has announced his retirement at the end of this year, just 2 years after his assuming the role. Some of you will recall that Dr. Spitzer espoused homophobic views at a regional meeting in Chicago, November 2018. More recently, he attempted to interfere in the Metro Chicago Region search for a new executive director, stating that the region's choice of an LGBTQ executive would result in the discontinuation of support from the national office. Chicago Region challenged his interference (which made us all proud), and, in January, chose the first out gay regional executive of the ABCUSA. We are hopeful that with Dr. Spitzer's retirement, the ABC will find prophetic leadership less hostile to the ministry of LGBTQ clergy and members.

— pastor deb

**IN MEMORIAM.** We have learned that Ronald Gregg, father of our Metro Chicago ABC Executive Minister, Rev. David Gregg, has died. We keep David and his family in our prayers.

**COVENANT ASSOCIATION.** Our little corner of the Michigan Conference UCC will hold its spring meeting 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturday, March 30, Bethlehem UCC, Ann Arbor 423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor. Please talk to Deb or Jay if you would like to attend.

## THE MICAH TABLE: WORK FOR JUSTICE

**BEAGLE CHEMICAL TESTING PETITION.** Last Sunday, Pastor Deb mentioned a petition in her sermon, compelling Dow AgroSciences to cease their chemical testing on beagles and release the dogs to the Humane Society for recovery and adoption. Since that time, Dow has ceased the testing, but not yet released the beagles to humane homes. The updated petition is [here](#). Please consider adding your name.

## GREENING OUR LIVES

*Our Creation Justice Team is initiating the UCC's program called 52 Ways to Care for Creation; they'll include one idea each week here in Woodside World.*

### THIS WEEK: ENGAGING ON A LARGER SCALE

Did you know: if everyone in the world lived the way people in the United States live, it would take five Earths to provide enough resources for everyone? Perhaps you have already committed to making a change by reducing your water consumption, using cloth grocery bags, or turning off your lights. These actions are all essential to leading a more creation-conscious lifestyle but they alone will not undo damage that has already been done. To engage a larger scale, consider donating to a faith-based organization that promotes Creation care by devoting time and resources to caring for God's creation. Two options are Creation Justice Ministries ([www.creationjustice.org](http://www.creationjustice.org)) and UCC Environmental Ministries ([www.ucc.org/environmental-ministries](http://www.ucc.org/environmental-ministries)).

And don't forget to let us know if you would like some environmentally-friendly cloth grocery bags, repurposed from our old muslin curtains and stenciled with a striking Woodside design! Tell us how many you'd like on the sign-in sheets in church or talk to Jamie, Leslie, Karen, Kendall, Liz, or Carla.

## OBSERVING LENT

**LENTEN DEVOTION MATERIALS** from the UCC are available for your personal use. The theme is *Take Nothing With You*, as we ponder what an unencumbered journey might look like. Check the back table; if we run out, we'll order more. No cost to you.

**INTROSPECTION ABOUT RACISM FOR WHITE PEOPLE.** Beginning this Sunday, some Woodsiders who have been doing anti-racism work will present tools and insights. Jamie, Leslie, and Robin participated last fall in a series of retreats for white people called "Doing Our Own Work." Now, they'll share with us. March 24, 31 and April 7, 12:30–1:30 pm, plan to linger over soup and snacks for good conversation. Just to help with food planning, please RSVP to [Hunter](#) in the church office.

**DOING A LENTEN THING?** If you're willing to share, drop a note to Pastor Deb and we'll print it in a subsequent issue of Woodside World. We're in it together.

## PALM SUNDAY AND EASTER

**READERS' THEATRE FOR PALM SUNDAY:** Tom is organizing a reading of the Passion Story for our worship April 14. If you'd like to be part of this, talk to Tom!

**A BANNER FOR EASTER:** Sundays, March 24, 31, and April 7, we'll work together to paint a new banner. We'll have Tyvek, and Easter paint colors on hand, set up in worship area, on the table by the water machine. Please grab a brush or sponge and leave your mark on this new abstract worship addition. Thanks, Jamie, for organizing.