

# mid October 2019

## News Points to Our Faith



Being a WISE Congregation  
[UCC Mental Health Network](#)

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UCC Partners Speak Out  
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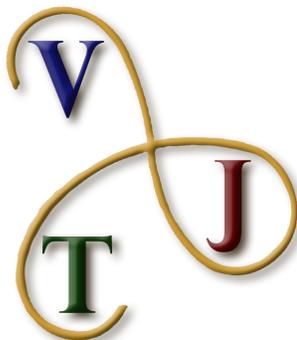




**God-seeds,  
reflections  
from Marc Stewart**

Consider how we people of faith organize ourselves for the sake of Gospel in the world. In our United Church of Christ way of organizing, we covenant in ever-fuller-circles of faith to be in relationships that impact us and make a difference to others. This "congregational" way of being in relationship is always seeking the broadest perspective. This special mid-October edition of the Montana - N.Wyoming Conference eNews focuses on how the faith we keep is making the news. Keeping faith with partners in the Middle East is making news on the Syrian border. Proclaiming faith with others in this country is making news in Washington DC about the Yemen War. The success of Sheridan UCC in its church remodeling work is making national news. There is even news in the announcement today that the MT-NWy Conference UCC has been recognized as the "best church in Billings for 2019."

Who knows why we make the news? Sometimes, it is because it is shocking that what we do for the sake of the Gospel is so different than the ways of the world. Sometimes, it is because we just put ourselves out there until we are heard. Sometimes, it is because we are fitting in with the wider community. Sometimes, it is because we have messed up. I like how the news items shared below (in the Mission Priorities section) point to our faithfulness.



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**The Three Mission Priorities of the  
MT-NWy Conference UCC:**

## All congregations will be vital and viable

“What does the Lord  
require of you  
but to do justice,  
and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with  
your God?”  
--Micah 6: 8 [NRSV]



Ten Sacred Spaces Across the United States Set to Receive \$1.9 Million in  
Preservation Grants includes Sheridan UCC  
National Program Continues to Save Sacred Spaces and Strengthen the Outreach of  
Congregations

Philadelphia, PA (October 17, 2019) - Today, the National Fund for Sacred Places (National Fund) announced awards to ten historic congregations across the United States. These ten places, representing some of America's most significant sacred spaces, have earned entrance into a national grant-making program that is set to invest \$1.9 million in their repair and restoration, the safeguarding of their physical legacies, and strengthening the value they contribute to their communities.

“All ten are extraordinary places, with important architecture and consequential outreach,” said Bob Jaeger, President of Partners for Sacred Places. “Each project has been chosen because we believe they are poised for success and their projects will have a lasting impact on how these places serve their communities into the future. We look forward to working with each of them to preserve their buildings and make the most of them as assets for ministry and service.”

Now in its fourth year, the National Fund for Sacred Places is operated by Partners for Sacred Places in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This year's group of participants includes a National Historic Landmark; the only Baptist church in Louisiana led by a female pastor; and churches designed by famed architects Stanford White and John Russell Pope.

CEO of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "The places protected through this grant program, from a Gothic Revival Church in South Carolina to a Buddhist temple in Hawaii, deserve to be protected and preserved for future generations."

Since its launch in 2016, the National Fund has drawn greater attention to the challenges and opportunities America's faith groups face as they engage in community outreach. Between 6,000 and 10,000 sacred places close each year in the United States, and with them, important community programming.

The National Fund began with nearly \$14 million in grants from [Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) Since then, the National Fund has awarded planning grants, training and technical assistance to 54 congregations and organizations. To date, the program has awarded over \$4.7 million in capital grants, ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000, to community-serving congregations representing 17 faith traditions in 29 states and the District of Columbia.

Grants assistance provided by the National Fund has not only helped congregations to preserve their sacred spaces but has helped them leverage more than \$9.5 million in new funding for major building campaigns in their congregations and communities.

In 2019 the program received more than \$15 million in additional funding, to continue the program through 2024.

This year's applicants had to demonstrate the significance of their buildings' religious architecture. The projects selected represent outstanding examples of Neoclassical, Gothic Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Romanesque building styles. Applicants also had to identify a compelling restoration plan and outlined a capital campaign that detailed internal fundraising goals and strategies.

The National Fund awardees for the 2019-20 program year are:

1. National City Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) -- Washington, D.C.
2. St. Paul's Episcopal Church -- Syracuse, NY
3. Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago -- Chicago, IL
4. St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church -- New Orleans, LA
5. Trinity Episcopal Church -- Abbeville, SC
6. Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin - Jodo Shinshu (Shin) -- Honolulu, HI
7. First Congregational Church of Long Beach -- Long Beach, CA

9; Lovely Lane United Methodist Church -- Baltimore, MD

10. First Congregational Church -- Sheridan, WY Featuring 31 stained-glass windows and a historic pipe organ, this Gothic Revival Style church started on a homestead near tryouts for Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Troupe. Today, the United Church of Christ congregation is a hub of community activity and hosts a substantial lunch program every week.

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About The National Fund for Sacred Places The National Fund for Sacred Places is a Philadelphia-based grant-making program of Partners for Sacred Places in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

[www.fundforsacredplaces.org](http://www.fundforsacredplaces.org)

About Partners for Sacred Places Partners for Sacred Places helps congregations and others with a stake in older religious properties make the most of them as civic assets in ways that benefit people of all faiths and of no faith. Learn more at

[sacredplaces.org](http://sacredplaces.org)

About the National Trust for Historic Preservation The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America's historic places. [www.SavingPlaces.org](http://www.SavingPlaces.org)

## **2. The Conference and Churches will be appropriately staffed and the staff will be justly compensated.**

Four outstanding clergywomen in the Montana - N.Wyoming Conference UCC are celebrating significant transitions in their ministries:

Rev. Pam Peterson is being installed as pastor and teacher at Red Lodge Community UCC this Saturday, October 19, 2019. Rev. Peterson came to Red Lodge from New York and Connecticut where she previously served as a local church pastor and hospital chaplain. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry through Hartford Theological Seminary, as well as being one of our recently trained leadership coaches. Rev. Peterson serves on the Conference Board of Directors as secretary, co-chair of the Faith Formation Committee, and chair of the Mimanagish Divestment Task Force. All are welcome to attend the 1 pm installation this Saturday, followed by a church dinner.

Rev. Amy Carter is being installed as pastor and teacher at Mayflower UCC in Billings on Sunday, November 10, 2019. Rev. Carter has served congregations for

the Conference Board of Directors as chairperson of the Human Resources Commission and on the Stewardship Task Force. Rev. Carter is also one of our recently trained leadership coaches. All are welcome to attend the 3 pm installation on November 10.

Rev. Laura Folkwein is being installed as associate minister at University UCC on Sunday November 24, 2019 in Missoula where she serves with senior minister, Rev. Jennifer Yocum. Rev. Folkwein had been the Minister for Community and Group Ministries at University UCC, and previously served as an associate minister at Good Shepherd UCC in Green Valley, Sahuarita, AZ with Rev. Randy Mayer. She serves as co-chair of the Faith Formation Committee, has been an organizer of PRIDE Camp, and is also one of our recently trained leadership coaches. All are welcome to attend the 10:30 am installation on November 24.

Rev. Tracy Heilman is celebrating a service of departure and leave-taking as she concludes her ministry with Columbus Community UCC on Sunday morning, November 24, 2019. Rev. Heilman will be moving to a position with the Illinois Conference UCC where she will serve as director of their Tower Hill Camp and Retreat Center on Lake Michigan. She has served on our Conference Board of Directors for 4 years, most recently as our Conference Moderator. Rev. Heilman is also one of our recently trained leadership coaches.

These are occasions for which your church might want to send a greeting. Addresses are included in the announcement of dates below. Please know that your congregation is also invited to attend these celebrations.

October 19, Installation of Rev. Pam Peterson at Red Lodge Community UCC 1 pm  
(PO Box 786, Red Lodge MT 59068  
[rlchurch@bresnan.net](mailto:rlchurch@bresnan.net) [pastorpampeterson@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpampeterson@gmail.com))

November 10, Installation of Rev. Amy Carter at Mayflower UCC, 3 pm  
(2940 Poly Drive, Billings, MT 59102 [office@mayflowerofbillings.com](mailto:office@mayflowerofbillings.com)  
[pastor@mayflowerofbillings.com](mailto:pastor@mayflowerofbillings.com))

November 24, Installation of Rev. Laura Folkwein at University Missoula UCC, 10 am  
(405 University Ave., Missoula, MT 59801 [graham@uccofmissoula.org](mailto:graham@uccofmissoula.org)  
[jennifer@uccofmissoula.org](mailto:jennifer@uccofmissoula.org) [laura@uccofmissoula.org](mailto:laura@uccofmissoula.org))

November 24, Service of Leave-taking for Rev. Tracy Heilman from Columbus Community UCC, 10:30 am, Church and Ministry Chairperson Ann Hanson is attending  
(PO Box 545, Columbus MT 590019 [ucccolumbus@gmail.com](mailto:ucccolumbus@gmail.com))

Your church might also choose to take a special offering in honor of these churches to send to our Conference Church and Ministry Commission fund that provides clergy support and scholarships to Members in Discernment.

### 3. The Conference will offer transformative experiences and have an active presence in places where we are not now present.

**The Washington Post**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019 • \$2

Partly sunny 62/58 • Tomorrow: Mostly sunny 61/44 38A Democracy Dies in Darkness

## Trump strikes back at criticism over Syria move

DEFENDS DECISION AMID BIPARTISAN FUROR  
Democrats walk out of meeting, citing 'meltdown'

BY SEUNG MIN KIM AND MIKE DEBOVIS

Sergio Mattarella, whom the White House was hoping for a visit Wednesday, "It's possibly never going to be very stable." Trump's decision this month to pull U.S. troops from northern Syria has led to a cascade of bipartisan criticism as worries grow that Turkey's military offensive will lead to the slaughter of Kurds.

President Trump on Wednesday attempted to distance himself from the escalating chaos in northern Syria following his decision to withdraw U.S. troops from the region and lashed out at lawmakers critical of the decision, including during an interview.

**100 FAITH LEADERS FROM ALL 50 STATES AGREE:  
CONGRESS MUST END  
ARMS SALES AND MILITARY SUPPORT  
FOR THE WAR IN YEMEN**

ADVERTISEMENT

In a public letter to Congress, local clergy from all 50 states proclaim:

*"As Americans of faith, we call upon Congress to end all U.S. arms sales and military support to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for the war in Yemen, which has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians and put millions more at risk of famine, in what has become the world's worst humanitarian crisis."*

(FULL LETTER AND SIGNATORIES ON REVERSE PAGE)

**OXFAM** America  
advocacy  
fund  
oxfamaction.org

**bread for the world**  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.  
bread.org

**AVAAZ**  
avaaz.org

Montana Association of Christians, I am occasionally asked if I will sign onto letters of pastoral and social concern. While I cannot usually sign a letter on behalf of anyone else, I am glad to provide witness to faith concerns. Today, I was a signatory on a wrap-around letter included with the Washington Post. I am also part of an amicus brief supporting the Montana governor's office as a group seeks to change the Montana Constitution in a way that would then allow state funding of religious schools (*Espinoza v. Montana DOR*). The United Church of Christ has a strong stance on publicly funded education that includes a separation of church and state and objection to [privatization of public education](#).

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### **Prayer Concerns**

Prayers of love and care with Elaine Black, past Conference Secretary, in the midst of her recent cancer diagnosis.

Prayers of love and care with Jerry and Elizabeth Franks in his recovery from a recent stroke. Jerry served Molt UCC until his retirement in June.

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- October 19** Installation at [Red Lodge UCC](#), Rev. Pam Peterson, 1 pm Saturday
  - October 20** Marc preaching in Miles City United UCC/DOC
  - October 21** East Area clergy cluster, Miles City, 9:30 am
  - October 21** COM meeting, Zoom and Billings, 7 pm
  - October 22** Central Area clergy cluster, Billings office, 10 am
  - October 29** Frontier, Inc. Board Meeting, Hardin
  - November 3** Daylight Saving Time ends
  - November 3** Harvest Meal, [Red Lodge UCC](#)
  - November 10** (Date Change) Installation at [Mayflower UCC](#), Rev. Amy Carter, 3 pm
  - November 11-17** Marc Stewart on vacation
  - November 18-22** Marc Stewart with [Council of Conference Ministers](#), Alabama
  - November 24** [Columbus Community UCC](#) Rev. Tracy Heilman's service of leave-taking
  - November 24** Installation at [University UCC Missoula](#), Rev. Laura Folkwein, 10 am
  - December 6-7** Church and Ministry Commission, 2:30 pm - noon, Billings office
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Check out our CONFERENCE WEB SITE

[www.mnwcucc.org](http://www.mnwcucc.org)

We are on Facebook. Stay in touch and get all of the latest news by liking our page.

[Click here!](#)

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