

WAC CHURCHLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2009



WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF CHURCHES - ON LINE NEWS
321 GARDENIA DRIVE
CHEYENNE, WYOMING 82009
307-631-8914
JOHN PEACOCK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Wyoming Association of Churches
Annual Meeting
October 9, 2009, Cheyenne WY**

**Special Guest
Rev. Peg Chamberlin,
President-Elect, National Council Of Churches**

Board Meeting

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
219 West 27th Street
9:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

OPEN SESSION WITH THE REV. PEG CHAMBERLIN:

THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY

First United Methodist Church of Cheyenne
108 East 18th Street
1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Learn more about the work of the Wyoming Association of Churches
Ask questions of Rev. Chamberlin.

ANNUAL MEETING FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS

First United Methodist Church of Cheyenne
4:00 p.m.

SOCIAL TIME/DINNER/WORSHIP

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

1908 Central Avenue

6:00 Social Time

6:30 pm Dinner

7:30 pm Worship

Rev. Chamberlin, Preacher

Installation of John Peacock as WAC's Executive Director

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Event registration: \$10 per person

Dinner tickets: \$15 per person

Join WAC at the special Annual Meeting rate of \$30 rather than the regular rate of \$40.

Lodging

A block of rooms is available at the Plains Hotel for those wishing to spend the night. Please call the Plains at 307/638-3311 and mention Wyoming Association of Churches (# **144436**) when making your lodging arrangements. Single rooms will be available at \$70 and doubles at \$80. Rates do not include sales and lodging taxes.

WAC AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

We are very pleased that The Rev. Peg Chamberlin, President-elect of the National Council of Churches of Christ, will be our guest at the Annual Meeting. Here is a bit of history on the relationship between WAC and NCC.

For the first time in many years, the WAC and the National Council of Churches in Christ (NCC) have developed a partnering relationship to address important environmental issues. A recent grant was given to the WAC by the NCC to publicize and promote the Wyoming Range Legacy Act which recently passed Congress and was signed into law by President Obama. The NCC and WAC lobbied hard to see to fruition the act's passage.

In addition, to the NCC's Washington, D.C. presence, two public local forums were held in Wyoming to garner local support. The forums were entitled, "On Sacred Ground - A Celebration of the Wyoming Range". They were held at Western Wyoming College in Rock Springs and the University of Wyoming in Laramie. The WAC's partners in putting on these events were Citizens for the Wyoming Range, the Wilderness Society, the Wyoming Outdoor Council, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Wyoming Wildlife Federation and the National Outdoor Leadership School.

Now that the bill has passed, the WAC has re-focused on another broad based effort to protect the Red Desert from excessive oil and gas development. The NCC will continue to work with WAC and are diverse partners in seeking to protect this unique part of Wyoming's landscape.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF COMMUNION DURING TIMES OF INCREASED INCIDENTS OF FLU

The following guidelines were developed by The Rev. Carol Peterson. Carol is an Episcopal Deacon and Parish Nurse. The guidelines are particularly relevant to those churches using a common chalice but may be readily adapted to other forms of administration. Carol may be contacted at

Public health officials continue to strongly encourage everyone to be prepared for pandemic flu. We encourage all churches to develop a plan in case there is a major flu outbreak in your community in the coming months. You may want to bring together a group of people at your parish to begin discussing what might be best for your parishioners. There may be some steps you might want to put into place now, additional steps you may want to implement once flu season starts, and still others you may want to consider should this become a public health crisis. The guidance contained provides a list of suggestions for accommodations you may wish to consider.

Cleansing the hands: Anyone handling the elements or serving instruments (e.g. Alter Guild, etc.), should thoroughly wash their hands or clean them with an alcohol based hand sanitizer in advance. All such persons should re-clean their hands just prior to setting the table and distributing communion. Otherwise, the ritual of the washing of the clergy's hands seen in some traditions at the offertory could be more than symbolic. The lavabo basin could be large, contain some liquid soap in addition to an adequate quantity of water, warm water for rinsing, and a proper towel could be provided so that a thorough hand washing can occur. A thorough 30-second hand wash will eliminate 95% of all germs (see additional attached guidance on hand washing and use of hand sanitizer).

Use of the common cup: In no case can exposure to a single virus or bacterium result in infection. For each disease there is a minimum number of the agent - generally in the millions - which must be transmitted from person to person before infection can occur. Our immunity against a few stray bacteria or viruses is immense!

There is a theoretical risk of transmitting infectious diseases by using a common communion cup, but the risk is very low. Experimental evidence shows that wiping the chalice with a clean linen cloth reduces the bacterial count by up to 90 per cent. Use of appropriate safeguards can further diminish the risk. Wiping the interior and exterior rim between communicants, opening the purificator to its full size, care in rotating the cloth to a clean area after each person sips, using more than one purificator as needed, rotating the cup between

communicants, use of a clean cloth for each service, limiting the handling of the chalice during communion to only the minister – all these things are useful in reducing the transmission of germs.

It is best to use wine that has at least 12% alcohol content as alcohol is a disinfectant. Chalices should be washed with hot soapy water and rinsed with scalding hot water following each Eucharistic service.

There have not been any known requests for public health officials to investigate any outbreaks of infectious diseases allegedly linked to the use of a common communion cup. However, communicants with low resistance to infection (i.e. cancer patients, those on immunosuppressant therapy, those with certain chronic diseases, etc.) should probably refrain from use of the common cup for their own protection. Sharing the communion cup is discouraged if a person has an active respiratory infection, or moist or open sores on their lips.

Intinction: You may wish to have a separate station for intinction only. It is recommended to use “personal intinction by the presiding minister” - allowing only the person serving (after they have adequately cleaned their hands) to dip the wafer into the wine chalice before handing them out to communicants. The ministers should either place the wafer that has been dipped in the wine into the palm of the parishioner’s hand or place it on their tongue – being careful to not make any physical contact while having additional hand sanitizer available if needed. There should be a separate chalice used only for intinction; do not use the common cup.

Intinction by parishioners is not recommended as it does not reduce the introduction of germs into the communion wine since the wafer is handled by the parishioner prior to intinction. Likewise distributing the bread to communicants and then the minister taking it from the communicants’ hands and then dipping it into the wine also defeats the purpose.

Use of wafers rather than a loaf of bread: It may be best to use individual wafers that are only handled by people who have just washed their hands / used hand sanitizer rather than use a loaf of bread where many individuals handle it / break off a piece. Or if a loaf of bread is used only the minister should handle it / break off pieces.

Concerning the Passing of the Peace: Hands are a notorious source for passing along germs! You may wish to suspend physically exchanging the sign of the peace by shaking hands, hugging, or kissing. Greeting each other with a

smile and a nod, a wave or a bow may be more appropriate.

Other suggestions to consider:

You may also wish to:

- Place reminders concerning the importance of hand washing in all lavatories.
- Place large pump bottles of hand sanitizer in appropriate and accessible places in the narthex and encourage parishioners to use some upon entering the church.
- Advise those serving, as well as parishioners, to stay home if they are not well.
- Place individually wrapped hand sanitizer towelettes in home communion kits.
- Promote flu vaccination for parishioners.
- Consider alternate ways to handle the collection plate rather than passing it along causing many people to touch it.
- Have a box of disposable masks available for those who may wish to use them.
- Encourage people to cough into the bend of their elbow instead of their hands.
- Promote good health practices such as stress reduction, getting adequate sleep, eating a healthy diet – especially lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Drink lots of water!
- Promote hand washing – hand washing – hand washing – especially before and after eating, using the rest room, blowing your nose, etc.
- Periodically sanitize those surfaces you can (e.g. door knobs, light switches, etc.) and pay special attention to the nursery!

Should it become necessary to cancel church services due to a public health crisis, it would be wise to have a phone call list and protocol in place so that any particularly vulnerable parishioners can be checked on as needed.

To learn more check out these web sites:

Wyoming Department of Health: <http://wdh.state.wy.us>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://cdc.gov>

ON SACRED GROUND



role follows:

The Board and Director are very pleased to announce that the Rev. Warren Murphy has agreed to serve as the Association's Environmental Projects Developer. Warren, thank you for taking on this task and for your continuing leadership in these areas. Warren's first article in his new

The Murie Center of Jackson Hole and the Wyoming Association of Churches (WAC) would like to extend this invitation to you to attend a day long retreat at the Murie Center in Grand Teton National Park on OCTOBER 19. The purpose of the retreat is to gather leaders of the faith community and the environmental community to discuss and hopefully plan for an On Sacred Ground event in the spring of 2010. The retreat will begin at 9 AM and conclude with a catered dinner at the center. Lunch will also be included. There is no cost for the retreat in that it will be funded through a special grant provided to the WAC by the Turner Foundation.

On Sacred Ground is a statewide effort to bring together the faith and environmental communities to discuss common issues and concerns about honoring and respecting the creation. This retreat will offer an opportunity for folks to talk over disagreements, common concerns and their passion for preserving the natural order both worldwide and in particular the Jackson Hole region. We have included both DuBois and the Pindale area in this definition. The retreat will be led by a trained facilitator. Our hope is that a common agenda will emerge and plans can be put forth to bring an event for the general public into fruition next year.

The On Sacred Ground concept began in 2007 with a statewide event held in Lander and has taken on a life of its own. Local affinity groups have been formed in Casper, Douglas, Laramie, Cheyenne and Lander. They have put on their own localized events over the past two years. Many of the state's faith leaders and denominational heads have been involved as well as a healthy cross section of the state's environmental organizations. Both the Murie Center and the WAC feel the Jackson Hole, DuBois and Pinedale areas should be a part of this growing movement.

Your church or environmental organization has been suggested as invitees for this planning retreat. We would ask that you send one representative of your congregation or organization who can speak for the group. For churches this would be the pastor or a key lay leader who cares about this issue. For environmental groups this would be either the director or a key person who feels this is an idea that can be embraced. We hope to have between 20 and 30 folks at the retreat. We want to keep an even number of faith and environmental people. We also realize that some faith people will be active environmental leaders and that some of the environmental leaders will be active in their local congregations. Please respond to me at this email address (warrencmurphy@gmail.com) if you are willing to commit to the retreat. It is essential that those in attendance plan to commit the entire day. We would request your response no later than OCTOBER 5.

One final note. If you know of another representative of the faith community or an environmental organization that is not included in this invitation please let us know. We don't want to miss someone who is passionate about this issue and would like to be included. Also contact Warren Murphy at this address if you have any questions. Looking forward to your response to this exciting opportunity.

Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune in Wyoming

NOT IN MY CHURCH: A Pastoral Response to Victimization

Provided by Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune of the Faith Trust Institute

- *September 22, 2009: Holiday Inn, Cheyenne*
- *September 24, 2009: Ramada Plaza, Casper*

No registration fee!

This workshop is appropriate for all members of faith and community based organizations

This may be hard to believe, but one in three members of your congregation has experienced some form of sexual abuse. This workshop will better prepare you to respond to victims, survivors and perpetrators. From a basic understanding of sexual abuse, we will focus on the elements of a pastoral response, especially the issues of forgiveness and healing. Emphasis will be placed on working with your community resources to support your pastoral role.

8:30 - 9:00 – Registration & Welcome!

9:00 to 4:30 – Training (Lunch on your own.)

For more info call 307/755-5481

Rev. Dr. Marie M. Fortune is the founder and Senior Analyst at Faith Trust Institute. She is a pastor, author, educator and practicing ethicist and theologian.

Ordained in 1976 in the United Church of Christ, she has written numerous books including *Sexual Violence: The Sin Revisited* (Pilgrim Press, 2005), *Sexual Violence: The Unmentionable Sin* (Pilgrim Press, 1983), *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse* (Harper San Francisco), *Is Nothing Sacred?* (Pilgrim Press, 1989) and *Violence Against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook* with Carol Adams, Eds. (Continuum Publishers).

Fortune is the editor of JORA, *The Journal of Religion and Abuse* and has served on the National Advisory Council on Violence Against Women for the U.S. Department of Justice and the Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence for the U.S. Department of Defense

Please indicate which training you will be attending:

September 22nd, Cheyenne _____ September 24th, Casper _____

Please provide one registration form for each individual from your organization.

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Special Needs _____

Please contact us as soon as possible so we can help make any arrangements necessary.

Please return registration forms to: WCADVSA

P.O. Box 236

Laramie, WY 82073

Or fax registration form to: 307-755-5482

For questions, please call: 307-755-5481

From Donn Kesselheim--

I have recently learned that the organization *Pathways to Promise* <<http://www.pathways2promise.org>> is sponsoring a "Faith-Based National Summit" in Belleville, Illinois, on September 29 - October 1, 2009. This organization also offers training for pastors.

(This is a Conference on Recovery from Mental Illness: Pathways for the 21st Century.)

REMEMBER TO GIVE TO THE WAC

As you should all be aware, the WAC has had to expand its fund raising capabilities because of the downturn in judicatory giving. Letters are being sent out to thank and remind our members to please renew for 2009. We also offer you and your congregation an opportunity to join our membership. Each individual and congregational member has a vote at the WAC annual meeting. You also make it possible to keep our online Churchletter and website to continue. Consider a donation based on the following categories.

Membership in WAC is easy. Just send us a check and your email address. Please have your congregation include us in the 2009 budget. We are a great Wyoming Mission project.

Congregational Memberships are:

\$40 for 50 members or less

\$75 for 51-100 members

\$125 for 101-200 members

\$200 for 200 or members

Individual and family memberships are \$25

Of course, additional gifts are also always appreciated. Please send contributions to the WAC at 321 Gardenia Dr. Cheyenne, WY 92009.

WAC CONTACT INFORMATION

The Wyoming Association of Churches

321 Gardenia Dr.

Cheyenne, WY 82009

New Phone #: 307-631-8914

wychurches@wyoming.com

John Peacock, Director of the Wyoming Association of Churches, publishes this newsletter. I welcome your comments and suggestions. If you know of someone who would like to receive our publication, please email us at wychurches@wyoming.com. If you do not wish to receive the ChurchLetter, simply email wychurches@wyoming.com and type "unsubscribe" in the subject line.