



The Angels' Voice



**“The bend in the road is not the end of the road,
unless you refuse to make the turn!”**

Anonymous: and passed to us by Tina Baeten

Pastoral Search: Good news and...

The pastoral search has moved very quickly over the last couple of months so I would like to fill you in on the events so far. First the good news.

We received over a dozen inquiries about the position and they were very diverse, in deed. They came from coast to coast and border to border. We even received an inquiry from Europe. They came from newly ordained ministers as well as established reverends. They came from both men and women and they came from both MCC and UCC (United Church of Christ) denominations.

Not everyone completed the application process but we continued with the process and held some phone interviews. And now for the not so good news.

The major problem we discovered is that at this time we are unable to hire a full time pastor. And while we had hoped someone would be able to commit to Angels of Hope MCC it was not the case. No one was in a position to accept our offer.

So what happens now? First, Rev Gail is still with us as Interim Pastor and with the help of the congregation worship services will continue as normal. Second, we will restart the pastoral search process again. We will resubmit the vacancy notice to both the MCC and UCC starting October 1st through December 31st.

It is not a time to lose faith and we will locate the person God is sending to us!

Upcoming thing for your calendar

- This coming Saturday the 27th is October Fest in Appleton. Once again Angels of Hope MCC will be a part of the celebration. Be sure to stop by and get some goodies! The ‘cheesecake on a stick’ it is said is *fabulous!*
- On Sunday October 19th we will host a bar-b-que and fundraiser at Rascals in Appleton. It will be after the Green Bay service and will feature lots to eat and a 50-50 raffle as well.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting for Angels of Hope MCC has been scheduled for Sunday November 30th, which is our 22 Anniversary as well. This is the most important meeting of the year because it sets the tone for the entire year and we elect our Board of Trustee members. It will be immediately following the morning worship in Green Bay.
- This October 6th will be the 40th Anniversary of the founding of MCC. Every year the Board of Elders asks all who can to make a special offering which is earmarked for a special project. This year the donations will be for MCC Youth Ministries. Please think about giving something extra for this wonder project. Visit www.MCCChurch.org and give mightily.
- On March 14th of 2009 Angels of Hope MCC and Positive Voice will come together for a St Patrick’s Day Dinner. Further details to follow
- Dave Palmer, long time friend of Angels of Hope MCC, plays the piano at Harmony Café in Green Bay on Sunday afternoons. Drop by and be entertained.

Rural Gay-Affirming Evangelical Church Vandalized

Beecher - The last thing Pastor Leonard Newlin expected to find when he checked the mail May 22 at his Northern Pines Community Church was a message that some in this rural Marinette County town harbor feelings similar to those that erupted last October in Jena, Louisiana. Hanging from the cross in front of his gay-affirming congregation's building was a toy action figure with a noose around its neck.

"It was a kid's toy but the hangman's knot around the action figure's neck makes me think that it was left there by someone a lot older," Newlin told Quest in a phone interview. "I think I'm the only openly gay minister north of Green Bay and everyone around here knows that. I don't think it was a prank."

According to Newlin, that was the conclusion of the local sheriff's department who is investigating the issue after the minister filed a formal complaint. "He (the responding county deputy) wanted to shrug it off as a kid's joke," Newlin said.

It's not the first time anti-gay tinged vandalism has occurred in the area Newlin claimed. "A couple of years ago in (nearby) Pembine the rental property that a woman with AIDS and her kids lived in was trashed after she moved out," Newlin said. "Whoever did that made the place unlivable." Newlin said the vandals in that incident were never found.

Newlin told Quest that he took photographs of the vandalism before calling the sheriff's department, but that he couldn't immediately offer up a picture of the incident because his camera was not digital. "I'm pretty computer illiterate and it's a half-hour to the nearest Wal-Mart where I can get the film developed," he said. The pastor has promised to send Quest a photo via U. S. Mail for future publication.

Newlin said though he was upset by the vandalism, his life partner was even more rattled. "He wants me to keep a loaded gun handy because he's out of town for work a lot," Newlin said. The nondenominational evangelical Northern Pines Community Church was founded by Newlin seven years ago. At its height the church claimed 35 members, though only about 6-7 currently attend weekly services. "Unfortunately

one of our most prominent members passed way last year," Newlin said. "Since then a lot of people have drifted away." — Quest May 29, 2008

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Editor's note: Pastor Newlin is a one-time member and Lay Delegate at Angels of Hope MCC.

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## Baldwin launches gay-rights caucus

DIANA MARRERO [dmarrero@journalsentinel.com](mailto:dmarrero@journalsentinel.com)

Washington - Madison Democrat Tammy Baldwin joined the only other openly gay member of Congress, Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), on Wednesday to unveil a new House caucus focusing on gay rights.

The group, called the LGBT Equality Caucus, has received the support of 50 other members of the House, most of them from California, New York and the Northeast. None of Wisconsin's seven other House members has joined the caucus.

Baldwin said she hopes to use the caucus, formed to advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans, to inform other lawmakers about issues important to those communities.

"Corporate America and the American people are far ahead of where Congress is right now," she said. She also sees the caucus as a way for lawmakers to begin "building for the future" once a new administration is in place after the November election.

All of the caucus members are Democrats except Reps. Chris Shays of Connecticut and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida. "This has not been part of the Republican agenda," Shays said. He added that he thinks advancing rights for all Americans is a matter of honor.

The idea for the caucus came about after Democrats took control of Congress and California Rep. Nancy Pelosi, who supports gay rights, became House speaker, Frank said.

Before that, those who supported gay rights had focused most of their efforts on fighting proposals to diminish rights for gays and lesbians, Frank said. Now, he said, he and Baldwin are working together to act on Pelosi's commitment to helping gay people live and work free of discrimination.

# Don't ask church to give you everything

*By the Rev. Mark Schmechel*

Recently my 1½-year-old son was eating in his high chair. I asked him if he wanted dessert and I showed him a cookie, a bowl of pudding, and a bowl of ice cream.

When I showed him the cookie, he said, "cooookie." When I showed him the pudding he said, "poo-din." When I showed him the ice cream, he said, "creeem". He wanted it all. He felt it was my responsibility to give him all three desserts. When I didn't, he got upset.

I wonder if sometimes people view church that way. It is the church's responsibility to give us a spiritual menu of our favorite, tasty programs. We want it all and when the church doesn't provide it all, we get upset.

Personally, I think that most American churches have made a costly mistake. We've communicated to people that if they show up to our programs, they are spiritually growing. We've gotten away from teaching people to take personal responsibility for their faith, to eat healthfully and feed themselves.

Attendance at programs is a good thing, but it doesn't always equal spiritual growth. The programs are not an end in themselves. More often than we'd like to admit, we've become more concerned about the numbers than the people.

Friends, the church was never meant to be a menu of options for people to pick and choose from. What happens when the church down the street has a bigger building or better programs? The church has fallen into the trap of American consumerism. Recent research shows that, on any given Sunday, 78 percent of people are absent from any branch of Christian churches. Perhaps we need to take a different approach.

What if church was a place where people could come and explore their faith?

What if Christ's followers were passionately living

out their faith? What if the people of the church were actually living out the mission of the church? What if we were being the church, not just attending church or doing church?

Our role and the role of the church is something that each of us needs to wrestle with and discern.

What do you believe is your church's responsibility (Ephesians 4:12)? What is your personal responsibility (Matthew 28:19-20)?

I want to learn more about how to be the church to others. As a pastor, administer religious programs to train people to live out their faith, one step at a time, every day. Let's not just go to church or attend church, why not be the church?

The Rev. Mark Schmechel is pastor of Journey Community Church in De Pere

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## ARCW Food Pantry

This year Angels of Hope MCC has been collecting food for the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin and I have been taking the donations to the ARCW office when the bin in the Green Bay sanctuary is full. I have made many trips. THANK YOU!

But, let's not forget them during the upcoming holidays. I was given a tour of the pantry at ARCW and they now have a walk in refrigerator and a similar walk in freezer. That makes donations of some perishable goods possible.

So when you are shopping for the football party how about buying a little extra for ARCW. Of course, Halloween is coming as well as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

If you have something frozen or perishable you can deliver that directly to ARCW at 445 S Adams Street in Green Bay.

I would like to see Angels of Hope MCC end the year with a truly stunning amount of generosity.



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**Birthdays...that we know of:**

Tina B—Larry H—David L—Meribeth W

Rev Elaine—Mary M—Dani P



The Banner at the left of this page was designed for us for the Pastoral Search packets by Jean at Allegra Printing in Green Bay and we have adopted and adapted it for use by the church. Many thanks to Allegra Printing for helping us produce such a great packet for the search.

**Unfinished World,  
Unfinished calling**