
Biblical & Theological Study

Ongoing: Bible Study This group meets weekly enjoys in-depth discussion on biblical topics as well as sharing from their lives. They will study The Minor Prophets until January and then will decide together on a new topic. Newcomers are always welcome; meet in the Conference Room.

Dec. 3 Visit to the Oriental Institute Professor Ted Hiebert of McCormick Seminary offered to lead us through the archeological artifacts from the period of the Minor Prophets at the Oriental Institute. We will carpool together (meeting 9:45 am at the Ronnow household) and share a Mediterranean lunch afterward. Please sign up in the church lounge.

Jan. 8 Dr. Frank Yamada, the new President of McCormick Theological Seminary and Professor of Hebrew Bible, is also our guest preacher on Jan. 8. Dr. Yamada has a deep interest in feminist and ethnic hermeneutics and has authored *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary Analysis of Three Rape Narratives*; he edited *The People's Bible*; and he has published numerous times in *The Christian Century*. Dr. Yamada is very enthusiastic about teaching and has been invited to teach on the topic of his choice... should be interesting!

Family Life

Dec. 4 2011—The Year the first 'Boomers' turn 65: Implications for our Healthcare System The "Baby Boom" generation constitutes a significant portion of the US population. When the last of the "Boomers" reach retirement age, almost 20% of the population will be 65 or older compared to less than 13 percent today. How will this impact the US healthcare system? Why should the church be interested? Chris Damon, church member and staff of American Medical Technologists leads this discussion.

Adult Education at First United Church

Christian faith is a journey; not a destination. Throughout our lives, it should call us towards transformation. We believe in the Christian formation is as important to adults as it is to children and youth. The Adult Education program at First United offers a wide variety of opportunities for education, growth, and fellowship—ranging from lectures by leading scholars to intimate discussions of life and faith. Whatever the setting, you can bring your whole self—including your questions, your doubts and your humor.

The Adult Education Committee is:

Chris Damon, Chair
Carolyn Belke
Pauline Coffman
Susan Swords-Steffan
Pete Todd
Michele Wolford
Bob Worley
Sara Stevenson
Leah Fowler, Staff



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Adult Education

December 2011 — February 2012

All Classes are 9:30-10:30am Sundays unless otherwise noted

Brief Overview—

Ongoing Sundays: Bible Study in the Conference Room

Dec. 3 (Saturday) A morning at the Oriental Institute with Dr. Ted Hiebert

Dec. 4 Baby Boomers (Chris Damon)

Dec. 11 Care for the Caregiver (Ryan Whitmore, Wisdom Flame)

Dec. 18 Care for the Caregiver (Ryan Whitmore, Wisdom Flame)

Dec. 25 No Adult Ed

Jan. 1 Spiritual Practices for the New Year (Julie Harley)

Jan. 7 (Saturday) Spiritual Retreat at Dominican University, "Always We Begin Again"

Jan. 8 Frank Yamada, President of McCormick Theological Seminary

Jan. 15 Israel/Palestine Part 1 (Pauline Coffman)
Intentional Community (Pastor Julie Harley)

Jan. 22 Israel/Palestine Part 2 (Niveen Saraas)
Intentional Community (Pastor Julie Harley)

Jan. 29 No Adult Ed (Congregational Meeting)

Feb 5 Israel/Palestine Part 3
(Israeli Deputy Consul General Shahar Arieli)

Feb. 12 Israel/Palestine Part 4 (Rabbi Brant Rosen)

Feb. 19 Israel/Palestine Part 5 (Pastor Julie Harley)

Feb. 26 Israel/Palestine Part 6 (Pauline Coffman)
Spiritual Practices for Lent (Pastor Julie Harley)

March 4 Israel/Palestine Part 7 (Martha Reese)

Family Life continued

Dec. 11 and 18 Care for the Caregiver Wisdom Flame, a non-profit that offers care and support for caregivers, will do a 2-week seminar for people facing long-term care decisions, and their loved ones who care for them. Here is what they offer:

Create Clarity - We help prepare individuals and families for their caregiving journeys. We help families in crisis situations find calm and clarity.

Restore Balance- We believe healthy, happy, and balanced caregivers can better serve themselves and their loved ones.

Build Bridges- We help build a common understanding between family members which helps clear through the sadness, frustration, resentment, and potential anger.

Live Legacies- We champion elders as sources of wisdom. We help them live lasting legacies.

Spiritual Practices

Jan. 1 Spiritual Practices for the New Year Instead of writing New Year's resolutions, Lead Pastor Julie Harley will teach some ways to deepen your meditation and prayer life in 2012.

Jan. 7 Spiritual Retreat: "Always We Begin Again" led by Pastor Julie R. Harley

The new year offers a unique opportunity to discern our values and re-examine our priorities. All of us are tempted to do too many things, and we will take time on Saturday, Jan. 7, to get away from our normal routines and consider where we should focus our time and energy in 2012. The retreat will be held from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm at Dominican University in River Forest. The cost is \$20 per person. Please register with Julie by Jan. 3.

Jan. 15 Living in Intentional Community, Part One Intentional community has been a Christian practice since the time of the early church. Lead Pastor Julie Harley will describe the elements of this lifestyle and explain her project to found an intentional co-housing community in Oak Park this spring. *Spiritual Practices Chapel*

Jan. 22 Living in Intentional Community, Part Two It is possible to practice elements of intentional community even if you are living in an apartment, condo or single-family home. How does intentional community living help promote an eco-friendly, spiritually rich way of life? *Spiritual Practices Chapel*

Feb. 26 (First Sunday of Lent) : Spiritual Practices for Lent. Lead Pastor Julie Harley will explore Lenten devotional habits you can practice each day through Easter on April 8. We will each develop an intention or discipline for this season.

Social Justice

Jan 15: Israel/Palestine Conflict, Part One: Overview of the history of the Conflict Beginning with Theodore Herzl in the late 1800's and ending with the current political situation, this will be a speedy review led by Pauline Coffman of the Adult Education Committee.

Jan. 22: Israel/Palestine Conflict, Part Two: Introduction to Kairos Palestine Led by Ms. Niveen Sarras, a doctoral candidate in Old Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology (LSTC) and a Palestinian Christian. Prior to coming to Chicago for study, she was Director of Christian Education at Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. Pauline Coffman. She will address "A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love."

Feb. 5: Israel/Palestine Conflict: Israeli Point-of-View: Part Three. Speaker: Israeli Deputy Consul General Shahar Arieli. First United Church of Oak Park welcomes the Deputy Consul General of the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest, Mr. Shahar Arieli, who will provide the perspective of Israel on issues and concerns raised in the Kairos Palestine Document. This representative of a long-time US ally in the region will also provide a sense of Israel's own plans and hopes for establishing a sustainable peace with the Palestinian people.

Feb. 12: Israel/Palestine Conflict: Part Four. Speaker: Rabbi Brant Rosen, Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, Evanston and co-founder of Jewish Fast for Gaza. In early 2011 he led a congregational trip to the West Bank and East Jerusalem (that included a dialogue with Palestinian Christians at Sabeel on its

itinerary). At this session, Rabbi Rosen will offer a Jewish spiritual response to the challenges posed by Kairos Palestine.

Feb. 19: Part Five. Kairos Palestine. Rev. Julie Harley. Julie will address "The Reality on the Ground" in Palestine.

Feb. 26: Part Six. Kairos Palestine and Kairos USA Pauline Coffman will report on a meeting in Bethlehem, December 5 – 10, 2011 where representatives from several countries are gathering to meet and consider a common format for the response to Kairos Palestine. Together we will ask, "What Does the Lord Require of Us?"

Mar. 4: Part Seven. Martha Reese, Moderator. Discussion of what we have heard. This is a time for participants to consider our response to Kairos Palestine and all the issues raised throughout this series.