



CONFERENCE NEWS

Together in Spirit - November 7, 2024



UNITY ESSENTIALS

Rev. Dr. Tony Clark, Conference Minister

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity."

Dear Folks:

The election is over. For the first time in months, our mailbox isn't full of ads for issues and candidates. There is a quietude, and politicians across our country are calling for unity.

Unity, though, cannot be declared; it must be discerned. Part of the problem right now is that we are not unified in seeking unity. We are neither unified by what the problem actually is nor by any solution that purports to make life better. We are not unified by who should lead us into unity, and we are not even unified in naming what is essential.

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity" hung on the wall of my seminary, Eden, near a set of stairs. I don't remember whether it hung at the top of a flight of stairs or at the bottom; either way it hung at a point of transition where the stairway landing became a hallway. I often paused by it and read it. It projected hope. It called for unity and freedom and charity. It alluded to a process of discernment.

It made me wonder what is essential to Christianity in general and the UCC more

specifically. How is the essential determined? How is the essential demonstrated? If

your non-essential is one of my essentials, how do we seek unity?

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity" dates to the

early 1600s, and was penned by an anti-papal Roman Catholic Archbishop in Croatia, who was judged by the church to be a heretic. It was written during

a tumultuous time in Europe, as shifts in political power and pietistic religious fervor pitted Christians against each other. Unity was hard to find. The aphorism's author, Marco Antonio de Dominis, sought reform within the Roman Catholic church, criticized the pope, was investigated by the Inquisition, fled to England, and became a bishop in the Church of England, where he criticized the Church of England, and was exiled back to Spain. He was not well liked. I wonder if he was seeking charity for his unorthodox views of church reform or if he was demanding that his ideas be seen as essential and, therefore, required others to join him in unity.

Like the UCC, the US has "united" in the name. I'm not feeling united with half the

country. I'm not sure how to even begin to find unity. I'm not sure whether we can even agree on what is essential or non-essential. The only answer I have is Eugene

Peterson's translation of I Corinthians 13:13, "for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love."

May we find love to be an essential, and may we find unity in Christ's love.

Peace,

Pastor Tony

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER

November 11 - Veteran's Day / Office Closed

November 19 - Green Team @ 3:00 pm

November 26 - Church and Ministry @ 3:30 pm

November 27 - Board of Directors @ 6:00 pm

November 28 - Thanksgiving Day / Office Closed

November 29 - Day after Thanksgiving / Office Closed

DECEMBER

December 7 - Women of Mayflower Christmas Bazaar

December 8 - STAR Resolution Zoom Meeting @ 1 pm

First Congregational Church in Savage

People's Congregational Church in Sidney

Bethlehem Congregational Church in Worden

Keeping churches in prayer in Novmeber



“Words have power. Words invoke reaction. When words are used in ways that stoke anger, hate, fear, and violence, they are weaponized to be hurtful and harmful.”

“We call for an apology to the people of Puerto Rico, to Vice President Harris, and to others whose dignity was diminished by these callous remarks framed in a political environment.”

“Let us counter all hate with love, offer our support for our neighbors, and work toward creating a world where everyone can thrive, feel safe, and experience the fullness of God’s love.”

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson
General Minister and President/CEO
United Church of Christ

Breaking the Chains

2-day Virtual Summit | Nov 13th & Nov. 20th
1:00-2:30 PM EST



Day 1: Deconstructing the Narrative
Day 2: Faith in Action

Register Today & Share with Community!



A CREATION JUSTICE WEBINAR

WHAT IS OWED

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE DEBT

Wednesday, November 13th | 1 PM ET



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