

**Sharing The Good News...March 2010...from Nancy E. Azar,**  
**Associate Conference Minister**

**Your OCWM Dollars At Work – In PNEC And Tennessee**

*Living the Ministry . . . R U ready ;-)*

***Faith Practices: Worship, Learning, and Serving for Vital Congregations***

From February 1-3, 125 Partners In Education of the UCC gathered in Nashville, Tennessee. The purpose of the gathering was to introduce a new UCC resource, ***Faith Practices: Worship, Learning, and Serving for Vital Congregations***.

Developed by Rev. Ken Ostermiller, Minister for Curriculum Development in conjunction with the Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Ministries, this resource is one which can be used throughout the life of a local church. It is a cutting edge web based resource which offers churches materials to be used in a variety of settings and for a variety of age levels. *Faith Practices* provides resources for worship, mission, stewardship, and education for communities of faith as they seek to be vital congregations. *Faith Practices* provides us with a language and a resource for the changes which are occurring in our churches. This resource is a new approach to faith formation and transformation based on the work of Dorothy Bass.

While at the conference we explored this new resource and had the opportunity to attend workshops on topics which were designed to equip those serving as Partners In Education to work effectively with local churches in developing vibrant ministries of education, worship, and service.

Through financial support from the national church, our conference and local churches in which they serve, four PNEC Partners In Education were able to attend the conference with me. I asked them to share with all of you what this event meant to them personally and/or for their ministries.

Certainly there will be more information to come in future months as we offer conference and regional events which will introduce to other Partners In Education and to all of you the power and potential of *Faith Practices*.

My prayer is that we will embrace this new model of growing in our faith and learning...after all...living our faith, experiencing our faith and practicing our faith is a lifelong process and journey!

Grace and Peace,  
Nancy

## **Highlights from the event from PNEC Partners in Education:**

**Janet Quinn, Director of Christian Education, St. John's UCC, Allentown.** I am so thankful for the opportunity to travel to Nashville, Tennessee to be part of this event. Not only did I learn more about a wonderful new resource- *Faith Practices*- but I was also able to connect with others in a way that every day life does not allow. Those few days were filled with God's love and grace as we learned, laughed, cried, worshipped, and explored together. (Can you tell I am excited to be part of such a richly talented group of Educators?)

Now we move on to our ministry, our passion: Assisting in the education ministries of our local churches! Watch, listen and feel for the Spirit as *Faith Practices* is introduced to you at your church. This new resource is not just a Sunday morning curriculum (although that could be one way to use it); it is whole church resource. Use it in an effort to revitalize your congregation. Do you long for a reason to come together that is NOT to talk about the budget, an elevator, a leaky roof or an upcoming fundraising dinner? Let's remember why we are part of a faith community and explore our faith together!

### **Rev. Candi Cain Borgman, Ziegel's Union UCC, Breinigsville:**

Having been a part of the Partners In Education (PIE) experience since its inception I am struck by how much a part of my faith formation and spiritual journey the people in PIE have been and are to me. I am thankful not just for the dreaming and visioning – not just for the practical and pragmatic ideas – but for the love, compassion and grace the Partners In Education have shared with me over the years! Thanks be to God!

### **Cindy Savercool, Christian Education and Youth Volunteer, New Creation, Easton: *Thoughts on the Workshop: Congregational Vitality- Ready, Set, Grow***

When we define our mission and seek to be a relevant church for the world today we then need to believe in it and work for it. Spiritual growth results in developing ministries that could reach out to the community, which in return could help new and unchurched folks to join us. God invites us to become passionate and open to diversity. Vision and transformation will develop with spirituality and hospitality. We can work at this through worship, evangelism and being stewards.

Let's use our physical and mental energies in combination with a joyous approach to all situations and activities. Let's live and grow!

Ready - Take the journey, listen, and embrace

Set - Organize, prioritize, make decisions and pray on it

Grow - Closer relationships, become a church of today and tomorrow

Renew, Re-energize and Revitalize

Let's commit to the Still Speaking God!