



The Homesteader

A Publication of Homestead Presbytery

March 26, 2014

Dear Kris

[Homesteader Print Version](#)

Please share this with other members of your congregation - You are welcome to use it as a Sunday bulletin insert, forward as an email, print copies OR include all or part of it in your own church newsletter.



CIRCLE OF HANDS

March 2014

One of my colleagues in Northern New England is a woodcrafters. His ministry includes making beautiful crosses of all kinds. When I left that presbytery for Homestead, I was gifted with one of his crosses. He titles it 'Circle of Hands' as a symbol of reconciliation.

I see many stories in this cross. The two hands of different wood with different colors represent different people or their ideas. They represent different cultures and traditions. All of which as we know can cause division and separation. The hands clasped recall that we all fit together. The circle surrounding the hands recalls God's presence that holds all together.

As disciples of Christ we are called to work as individuals and as the Church to bring reconciliation. Within the circle of God's embrace, it is difficult to perpetuate the separateness that engenders distrust, hate, suspicion and mean spirit. Outside the circle, God's vision of wholeness is incomplete. I look at the hands clasped and see a vision of strength and power. One hand clenched is far weaker. One hand clenched is combative and hurtful. Within the circle of this cross, there doesn't seem to be room for one, palm open, and one a fist. The first would break the circle. Sometimes, I think we forget that. Sometimes our work together in the church does seem to be more fight than common purpose.

That's not to say we all have to agree....we are all separate, and of differing 'wood'. But if we don't join together within the call of God's vision for us, we break the circle of God's embrace and give a witness that is contrary to God's intention for us. When disagreements arise, we

All Youth Invited to Summer Missions

Camp four work days (5-6 hours ea) and a Sabbath/Free Day at the end of the week. Work sites/projects are lined up with help from the Y's Volunteer Coordinator.

Where: Estes Park, CO.
YMCA Camp of The Rockies

When: June 2-8, 2014

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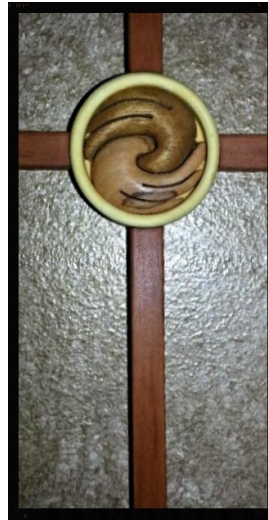
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are the better for it if the divergent opinions hone the decision finally made. We are weaker if the decision is a resolution of a fight with winners and losers. We must stay in the circle. We can do that if we are frequently reminded that our real goal is for God to be the winner...not us. We can do that if we are reminded that when we clasp the other's hand, we can't form a fist. We can do that when we acknowledge that without the other, there is a whole in the circle...and in our witness.

I keep this cross on my stairway to be a frequent reminder not only of friends served but also of God's call for me...and I posit, for us all.



2014 will be the fourth year that the UCC has provided a day-by-day opportunity to fast from carbon as a Lenten discipline. Initiated by the UCC and endorsed by other denominations and faith groups, people of every Christian perspective - and people who are not Christians - have benefited from this opportunity to become more conscious and conscientious in their daily lives.

[Sign up to participate in the Lenten Carbon Fast](#), or join the event on [Facebook!](#)

You are invited to join and commit to fasting from carbon during Lent. Beginning Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent, participants will receive a daily email with the day's suggested carbon-reducing activity. Many will also suggest ways to engage others.

God is calling us to be the change we long to see. Let us engage this spiritual discipline, grateful for all God has entrusted to us, and trusting that with God all things are possible.

HOMESTEAD HAPPENINGS!



Schuyler says farewell to Pastor Laura Hollister.



**Conflict Transformation Workshop at Calvin Crest on March 1st
with presenters Rev. Kathy Keener-Han
and Steve Frazier.**

Tell us what's going on in the life of your congregation or ministry -
Church news, event promotion, mission articles and photos are all welcome!
Please submit articles to Jessica at hpooffice@homesteadpres.org
or mail to 8300 East Pointe Rd. Lincoln, NE 68506

Contact Information

Congregational Resource Coordinator, Kris Peterson
Homestead Presbytery office, Jessica Kottmeyer

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