

Board of Directors

President:

Rev. Richard N. Myers

VP Organization & Development

Elder John Wheeler

VP Program & Discipleship

Sue Murray

VP for Social Justice

Marvin Mich

Treasurer

Kenneth Anderson

Secretary

Sr. Pat Switzer

Administrator

Elder Marie Gibson

Denominational Representatives

American Baptist Churches Rochester-Genesee Region

Rev. Arlen Vernava
Lynne Stewart

Episcopal Diocese

Robert Crystal
Rev. Denise Yarbrough

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Finger Lakes Conference

Doris Morgan
Rev. Ghislaine Cotnoir

Presbytery of Genesee Valley

Rev. Gordon Webster
John Wheeler

Roman Catholic Diocese of Rochester

Marvin Mich
Deacon John Brasley

United Methodist Church, Rochester District, W N Y

Rev. Ruthellen Hoyle
Stuart Mitchell

United Church of Christ, Genesee Valley Association

Alan Daily

Elected Members

Rev. Karyn Carter
Mary Discher
Colleen Vogt
Nancy Fenity
Rev. Roy Hedman
Sr. Beth LeValley
Rev. Lawrence Hargrave
Merilyn Israel
Rev. Alvin Parris III
Rev. Ed Palumbos

the *Ecumenical Messenger*

Fall 2006

Overcoming Violence: Creating a Culture of Peace

**Three outstanding opportunities to think about violence,
listen to words of experience, and work together to create peace in our city;
Sponsored by CRCDS, Friends of the WCC, Faith Community Alliance & GRCC**

Rochester's Christian community will welcome an outstanding leader of the World Council of Churches at a series of events over two days, November 13 and 14. The Rev. Hansulrich Gerber, Coordinator of the WCC's "Decade to Overcome Violence," will describe and interpret the current ministries of the WCC, preach in a worship celebration, and lead a seminar and workshop focused on understanding violence and how faith communities can respond.

The Rev. Gerber is a Mennonite pastor from Geneva, Switzerland. Before assuming his current position, he directed the International Mennonite Peace Committee and the European relief work of the Mennonite Central Committee. His assignment with the WCC is to coordinate its decade-long program responding to the growing threat of violence within families and communities and among nations. His ministry entails networking churches and movements worldwide.

Schedule of Events:

Monday, Nov. 13, 12 Noon, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School
(1100 South Goodman Street- A special luncheon)

"Transformed by Grace:

Ninth Assembly Priorities for the World Council of Churches"

A multimedia journey to the February, 2006 WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and an update on emerging WCC program priorities. A buffet luncheon will be served at a cost of \$12.00. For luncheon reservations, please use the tear-off registration form (back page of this newsletter,) or call (585)254-2570 by **November 8.**

Monday, Nov. 13, 7:00 PM, Baber AME Church, 550 Meigs Street

An Ecumenical Worship Celebration

Rochester area Christians are invited to "taste" something of the wonderful Spirit that filled the WCC's Ninth Assembly in Brazil. The liturgy will include prayers, litanies, and readings from the Assembly. Special music will reflect the Church in its great diversity. The sermon, entitled "*Unity in Spirit in the Bond of Peace: The Changing face of the Global Church*" will be brought by Pastor Gerber.

(Continued on page 3)

GRCC is an association of churches, ecumenical clusters, religious organizations, individuals and denominations working together in our community – sharing in worship, prayer, interfaith dialogue, and justice ministry.

Greetings from the President



I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 3:2).

This issue of the Messenger shows you how your “community of churches” has moved from the “milk” of the gospel, to the “meat” of it. Here are three ways we are doing this:

- ◆ We confront the problem of violence in collaboration with the Divinity School and the Friends of the World Council of Churches of Rochester by hosting the Rev. Hansulrich Gerber of Geneva, Switzerland, who directs the “Decade to Reduce Violence” for the World Council of Churches. He will be with us November 13 and 14 both to help us learn from the WCC experience around the world and to learn from our experiences in Rochester.
- ◆ We collaborate on November 15 with Faith Community Alliance to initiate a local response to violence. This gathering of church leaders will be led by GRCC Board member the Rev. Karyn Carter, chaplain at the School of Industry and survivor of violence.
- ◆ We announce organizing standards that insure justice for local workers who seek to organize a union. These were endorsed by the GRCC board of directors at our September meeting.

Spend a few minutes learning about each of these “meaty” initiatives. Each one is an open door for you. Each depends on the prayers of passion and gifts of Christ’s Church. We have called out to you in our fall appeal and you are responding, as we strive to reach our goal of \$12,000 to finish our year in joyful praise and thanksgiving.

Let’s awaken the power of the mainline churches and our ability to connect with many of God’s people. Come through these doors! Sit down together! Share the feast!

In Christ’s love,
Richard Newell Myers

We are thankful for the support of our members, partners, and individual donors. Is your congregation a member? Have you sent your member dues for the year? Don’t wait. We are doing such good work now to address the needs of our most vulnerable--those who count on the faith community to make a difference. Help us to make that difference.

Your financial support to GRCC is very important. Won’t you take a moment to send your personal contribution to: GRCC, 2 Riverside Street, Rochester, NY 14613. To find out more, call: 585-254-2570 or fax: 254-6551

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Enclosed \$ _____

Please fill out the form and mail your donation to: GRCC, 2 Riverside St, Rochester, NY 14613

And don’t forget to visit us on the web at www.grcc.org



Raise up the Foundations of Many Generations The Church's Response to Violence

Wednesday, November 15 at 10 a.m.
Mt. Olivet Baptist Church (141 Adams Street, off Ford St.)

Christian leaders will come together to **Listen** to a word from a witness to violence, to **Learn** initiatives and insights from some of our sisters and brothers, and to **Launch** a new initiative in the community

LISTEN: The Rev. Karyn Carter, who suffered the murder of her sister, is called to bring us a word from scripture and life. Rev. Carter served as program director for Families and Friends of Murdered Children and now serves as the area Chaplain at the Industry School Complex and other upstate New York prisons. She is sadly, but uniquely, qualified to bring a word of challenge and hope to us. She will speak from scripture:

“Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” Isaiah 58:12

LEARN: Responding to Rev. Carter’s message will be a panel of church leaders including the Rev. Dr. John Walker, pastor of Christian Friendship Baptist Church; the Rev. Alan Newton, Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches of Rochester Genesee Region; Ms. Donna Ecker, Director of Bethany House; the Honorable Roy King, ordained minister and City Court Judge. Other important speakers will join the panel.

LAUNCH: We will launch a series of forums first to hear testimony from those who suffered violence and then to *raise up the foundations* on which once our community was stronger. Together, we will seek to recover the community standards that once kept children and youth safe and focused. Together we will find where our core community standards lie. The internal strength of our communities is the key to overcoming violence.

This is what we believe: The broad spectrum of the Christian community must find common purpose in this enterprise. Neither creed nor ritual nor culture can keep us from this common call. **MAKE A COMMITMENT** to join old friends and new friends to ***“Raise Up the Foundations of Many Generations.”***

Presented by: Faith Community Alliance in collaboration with Greater Rochester Community of Churches.
Program is free – all are welcome. (585) 254-2570

continued from page 1

“Overcoming Violence: Creating a Culture of Peace”

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 8:30 - 11:45 AM, CRCDS, 1100 South Goodman Street

“Seeking Spiritual Dimensions Underlying the Crisis in Violence”

A seminar probing for root causes and deeper understanding. Rev. Gerber will share insights from the “Decade to Overcome Violence” and a panel of diverse, local faith community leaders will respond. Panelists will include: Muhammad Shafiq (Muslim), V.V. Raman (Hindu), Frank Howard (Buddhist), Gail Ferraioli (Judaism), and Peter Peters (Christian).

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 1:45 - 4:00 PM, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

“What Can We Do in Rochester to respond to Violence in Its Many Faces?”

A workshop, led by Rev. Gerber, will entail sharing information about ways communities can respond to violence, sharing stories of hope from Rochester and around the world. We also will hear from local governmental and social agencies, and from faith-based groups, who have devised creative ways to prevent and respond to violence. (Registration form on Page 4)



Greater Rochester
Community of Churches
2 Riverside Street
Rochester, NY 14613

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rochester, NY
Permit #94



Greater Rochester Community of Churches Board of Directors Adopts Community Organizing Standards

At its September 25 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Greater Rochester Community of Churches adopted "Community Organizing Standards," a document that originated with Rochester area clergy. It was written in support of efforts of local workers who are considering forming a hotel workers' union.

Both as a matter of our faith and as a matter of law, we believe that workers should be free to establish or not establish a union without coercion or intimidation by their employer or by representatives of the union. The document states seven principles:

1. Freedom from retaliation and intimidation;
2. Freedom from coercion;
3. Equal access to information;
4. Open and reasonable debate;
5. Truthfulness;
6. Timely response;
7. Freedom from outside harassment.

We join with local clergy to invite local management and national ownership of the Crowne Plaza Hotel to meet with us or representatives of the clergy and faith communities and to support these principles. To date, the efforts of the local clergy coalition have been unsuccessful.

We have been monitoring adherence or violation of these principles as workers consider forming a union. If you or your faith community would like to sign on to this statement of standards, go to our website and follow the link, send us an email at grcc1@frontiernet.net, or call us at 254-2570.

Overcoming Violence: Creating a Culture of Peace
REGISTRATION FORM

To attend the luncheon, seminar or workshop, your advance registration is requested.

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City/Town _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Your Church/Faith Community _____

___ Reserve lunch on Monday, November 13; Number in party _____
(Enclose your check payable to **GRCC/WCC Luncheon**; (Cost for lunch: \$12 per person)

___ Register me/us in the **SEMINAR** on Tuesday morning, November 14

___ Register me/us in the **WORKSHOP** on Tuesday afternoon, November 14

Please complete and return by **November 8** to: Greater Rochester Community of Churches