



WISCONSIN
CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Shift Space

by Tisha Brown

SHIFT

From Maintenance to Mission

Welcome to Shift Space, a new feature of our newsletter in which we will highlight ministries in the Wisconsin Conference and beyond that are examples of Shift, share articles, and suggest resources in support of our efforts to be the church in ever evolving ways.

Here is a quick story about how First Congregational UCC, Genoa City, is embracing Shift. Their pastor, Jennie Swanson wrote:

"I watched the SHIFT videos and think this is all a good thing for us right now. I plan to use the videos initially as council devotions, and then have each of our groups watch them too. I launched an emphasis this year on M&M's, for Mission and Ministry. I have been doing a lot of teaching about the history and purpose of the church, that it is not just for us...not just about our clubs and boards...but that everything we do here needs to be prioritized and evaluated by its Mission and Ministry! So, lots of chocolate M&M's all around the building and people are really getting into it. I think we are ready to stop, think, pray, act and serve, rather than continue to run on the hamster wheel of maintenance, programs and tasks."

Then she shared this example of how her congregation is beginning to shift:

"I preached a pretty straight forward and to-the-point sermon Sunday about all this need for mission and ministry, how the church is not about us and our needs, how Jesus didn't sit in the synagogue all day and hope people showed up, didn't whine about meeting attendance, didn't blame everything on the next generation. Instead he invested in preparing his disciples and engaging them actively in ministry. The sermon went really well. I gave them chocolate too and that helped."

"Just today, a member opened a conversation among the women serving our community meal that we need to 'rethink the Mission of BYKOTA,' which is our monthly older ladies group. She said it ought to spend less time on business meeting stuff, and more time on helping, serving, sending cards and making visits to those in need."

One of the most important aspects of Shift is our ability to hold on to the things that are valuable about our communities of faith while at the same time considering what we might need to let go of or how we might need to alter the focus so that what has meaning and value for us might also touch and transform our world.

We'd love to highlight a story from your congregation in this space. Send your stories to me, Tisha Brown, at tbrown@wcucc.org.

Information on SHIFT: wcucc.org/shift