

OUTDOOR MINISTRY MATTERS – Summer Tour Report

*The fire on the altar shall be kept burning; it shall not go out. Every morning the priest shall add wood to it...
A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar; it shall not go out. (Leviticus 6:12-13)*



This was the message received by a number of congregations in the Wisconsin Conference this past summer (as it was received at Annual Meeting in June). The call was being issued to all those responsible for tending to the altar fires of outdoor ministry here in the Wisconsin Conference and beyond. These symbolic sacred fires that burn are lit so that all people may see and be seen in the spirit of love that we might live lives of gratitude and grace in celebrating the good works of our Creator as experienced and witnessed at our two camps, Moon Beach and Pilgrim Center.

The message was clear and the messenger was passionate. Plymouth UCC in Burlington was gracious enough to share their pastor, Rev. Bob Wang, with the wider church as they blessed him with a 3-month sabbatical. Bob personally chose to dedicate a portion of his sabbatical time serving as an ambassador of sorts on behalf of outdoor ministry; with an emphasis on the CAMPITAL Campaign because *Outdoor Ministry Matters!*

This portion of Bob's pilgrimage began on July 4th and concluded on September 6th. During this period he sang, preached, prayed with, and witnessed to twelve of our conference churches. Though the demand exceeded the number of Sundays available to the tour, those that were able to book him took advantage of Bob's presence to introduce, spark, affirm, or celebrate their commitment to the campaign. All of the churches visited were enthusiastic about the campaign and are further resolved to adopt generous and sacrificial goals in support of the campaign. The following churches graciously received Bob and extended some good old fashioned Wisconsin hospitality:

Mt. Vernon, Zwingli UCC - St. Germain, Community UCC - Kewaskum, Peace UCC - Wausau, Grace UCC - Green Bay, Union Congregational UCC - Mineral Point, Congregational UCC - Dodgeville, Plymouth UCC - Fitchburg, Memorial UCC - Clintonville, Christ Congregational UCC - Wisconsin Rapids, First Congregational UCC - Fremont, Hope UCC - New London, First Congregational UCC.

In lieu of a fee for his services, Bob asked that an equivalency amount be directed to the campaign aside from any pledge or goal being considered. Those fees along with a loose offering taken each Sunday raised nearly \$5,000.

Setting any thoughts about "fund raising" aside, Bob was pleased to have had the opportunity to be present in a few of our local churches and to represent the many faces of UCCI and outdoor ministry in general. He prays that his presence has helped to raise further awareness and thus increase the support and use of our camps in the larger scheme of things as we seek to build and grow outdoor ministry in the Wisconsin.

**THANK YOU REV. BOB WANG FOR YOUR GENEROUS COMMITMENT OF TIME TO
PERPETUATE OUTDOOR MINISTRY IN THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE UCC!**