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March 5, 2009

“Building Caring Congregations: Collaboration, Spirituality and Forgiveness”
with *Janet Ramsey*

What: This seminar will focus on congregational (team-based) care, the importance of facilitating spiritual resiliency in members of all ages, and the need for forgiveness and healing in communal life. Taking seriously the need for ministries that are proactive, vocationally clear, and practically informed, participants will begin by exploring how our faith communities might use theological and social science resources to envision the practice of ministry as a collaborative venture. A narrative approach to envisioning ministry with and by persons of all ages, including older persons, will be the basis for the second part of the day’s presentation. The seminar will conclude with a focus on the importance of deep understandings of the human and spiritual dynamics of the most difficult and important work for all religious communities in today’s world: forgiveness and healing.

Who: Dr. Janet Ramsey is Associate Professor of Congregational Care Leadership at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. A former parish pastor and a Diplomate in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, she is first author, with Dr. Rosemary Blieszner of Virginia Tech, of two books on aging and spirituality: *Spiritual Resiliency in Older Women* (Sage, 1999) and *Aging and Spirituality* (Baywood Press, forthcoming, 2009). She is also first author, with Dr. Lois Malcolm, of *Discerning Forgiveness*, a cross-disciplined book on the theology and pastoral care of forgiveness.

When: Thursday, March 5, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: Jones Conference C/D in Knutson Campus Center at Concordia College, Moorhead, MN

Cost: Clergy - \$95; Laity - \$75; Fee includes lunch. Group Rate (three or more): \$55 each
Early Bird Discount (if paid by Feb 20): \$10 off

CEUs: .4 (= 4 contact hours) - \$5 admin fee

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April 27, 2009

“Tapping into the Hidden Assets in Rural Congregations” with *Luther Snow*

What: When we look at the “half-full cup,” we recognize our assets and the abundance of God’s gifts. This is especially crucial in small rural settings, which often focus on the “half-empty cup.” This seminar will help you understand how a theology of abundance can bring renewal and hope to rural—or any—congregations. Practical steps for mapping assets and tools and techniques for reversing the negative cycles of need and conflict will be provided.

This event is co-sponsored by the Northern Plains Conference, UCC and CHARIS.

Who: A graduate of Harvard (BA) and the University of Chicago School of Business (MBA), Snow now lives in Decorah, Iowa. His focus is on abundance thinking rather than negativity and fatalism. To help shift congregations in that direction, he wrote *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Assets* (Alban, 2004). Brother David Andrews, former director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, said of the book, “Action-oriented love can change things. That’s my conclusion after reading this how-to book that offers much more than instructions.” Snow has also served as director of the Congregational Asset Mapping Project for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

When: Monday, April 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Where: Maryvale Retreat Center, north of Valley City, North Dakota. An online map search (Mapquest or Google) will help you find this great place.

Cost: Because of the generous support of the Northern Plains Conference UCC, we are able to offer this at a very low price: a flat registration fee of \$25, including lunch.

CEUs: .4 (= 4 contact hours) - \$5 admin fee

Sundays, April 19, 26 & May 3 (2-4 p.m.)

“Christian Everyday Mystics” with Vern Goodin. Christian mystics aspire to apprehend spiritual truths inaccessible through intellectual means, typically by seeking spiritual union with Christ through contemplation. This three-week course will explore the lives of four historic and modern Christian mystics to determine insights they still offer for living today. Included are Francis & Clare of Assisi (1181-1226 and 1193/4-1253), Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), and Karl Rahner (1904-1984). For more information on fees & location call F/M Communiversity at 218.299.3438 or check the website at www.fmcommuniversity.org.

Saturdays, April 4, 18 & 25 (2-4 p.m.)

“Reading the Scriptures of Jesus” with Elna K. Solvang. The faith and teachings of Jesus are rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, the books Christians call The Old Testament. Many modern readers find these books bewildering and intimidating. This class will provide a geographical, historical and literary framework to help readers understand and gain meaning from these books. Whether you are a Sunday School teacher, a confirmation student, someone who has struggled reading the Old Testament or someone who has been curious but never tried, this class has been designed with you in mind. For more information on fees & location call F/M Communiversity at 218.299.3438 or check the website at www.fmcommuniversity.org.

Sundays, March 15, 22 & April 5 (2-4 p.m.)

Jesus & Thomas in India with Syed Sajid Ahmad & Dr. Arland Jacobson. Studies during the last century provide intriguing support for ancient traditions about Jesus' and Thomas' sojourn in India. There seem to be two traditions or claims. One is that Jesus visited India between the ages of 13 and 29 - the so-called missing years in Jesus' life. Another is that Jesus went to India after the incident of crucifixion. These claims are based on ancient traditions and sources. There is also a strong and important tradition that Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, visited India. And there is a body of literature in the Thomas tradition, which was especially strong in Syria, including the Gospel of Thomas (found in Egypt in 1945) and the Acts of Thomas. We will review the evidence presented by

various researchers and its implications on traditional beliefs and understanding in Abrahamic faiths. For more information on fees & location call F/M Communiversity at 218.299.3438 or check the website at www.fmcommuniversity.org.

Sundays, March 15, 22, 29 & April 4 (2-4 p.m.)

Faith & Science: Beyond Creation vs. Evolution with Marc Wallman. 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. Although a century and a half has passed, debate over Darwin's work, and its implications for people of faith, has not slackened. Does Darwin represent the final nail in God's coffin? Does experience of the divine trump human reason? This course will explore the relationship between science and faith by a person who finds truth in both. For more information on fees & location call F/M Communiversity at 218.299.3438 or check the website at www.fmcommuniversity.org.

*** CHARIS Discounts**

50% discount on registration fee:
(for retired pastors & pastors
in their first 3 yrs of ministry)

25% discount on registration fee:
(for those 65 or older, interns and students)

Group discounts: call the CHARIS office

CEU Certification

CEU certificates are available for a \$5 administrative fee.

Payment

We accept checks, Visa or Mastercard.

Cancellation & Refund Policies

Participants who wish to cancel must provide notification in writing by mail, phone, or email ... to receive a refund. A 15% administrative fee will be charged for all refunds.
