

## STILL CHURCH



**In the midst of change  
And economic crisis  
We are called  
To be  
Church.**

**It is not the expectation of our congregants or our communities that we ‘save them’ from the economic, environmental and political landscape, but that in the midst of that landscape we respond with compassion and hope. We are called to listen to those who are hurting, share bread with those who are hungry, remember who we are as God’s people and whose we are as a people belonging to God, and in prayerful community enable people to celebrate their faith and stand with one another locally and internationally in creative and courageous ways.**

**We cannot save ourselves from harm, but we can save ourselves from isolation, fear and desolation.**

There was once a goose that laid a golden egg each day.

And the family that owned the goose, delighted in the riches that those eggs brought. As time went by, however, they became avaricious, and were impatient from day to day for that daily egg.

So, they decided to kill the goose and get all the eggs at once.

(author unknown)



**“So long as overt and covert greed undergirds an economic system which impoverishes people in many parts of the world, humanity is building up fragmented societies.”**

Setri Nyomi, General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)

## Toward Daring Discipleship



April 2009

**In an economy of fear**

...Therefore we reject any ideology or economic regime that puts profits before people, does not care for all creation and privatizes those gifts of God meant for all. We reject any teaching which justifies those who support, or fail to resist, such an ideology in the name of the gospel. . . Now we proclaim with passion that we will commit ourselves, our time and our energy to changing, renewing and restoring the economy and the earth, choosing life, so that we and our descendants might live (Deut 30.19).

**“Accra Confession”  
(2004 agreement of member  
churches of the World Alliance of  
Reformed Churches)**

## LEANING INTO THE WIND IN AN ECONOMY OF FEAR



### Reading

*Making a journey to understand our own and other's suffering:*

Gustavo Gutierrez. **On Job: God-Talk and the Suffering of the Innocent**, Maryknoll, Orbis, 1985

*Finding Practical ways of sustaining and strengthening our faith in daily life:*

**Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People**, ed. Dorothy C. Bass San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher, 1998

*In personal or communal prayer and reflection this is a good time to return to the Psalms. Read the Psalms not so much as our word FROM God, but our cry to God which reflects both the best and sometimes the worst of the human spirit in prayer.*

### Four United Church Resources:

**Restoring Communities to Live In:** A Community Engagement Handbook.

"This booklet is a tool for congregations to help them get to know and better understand the larger communities they are part of. A way of looking outward from our church communities and opening our doors to our neighbours." *Available through the UCRD*

**Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire** is the report to the 39th General council in 2006. It is a tool for understanding the context in which we live and in which we participate, and has the potential of bringing new understanding to the complicated realities in which we find ourselves today.

**Challenging Empire:** Children **Challenging Empire** offers sessions to aid in understanding empire, which may be as useful with adults and youth as well as children. **Challenging Empire: Stories and Activities to Transform Your Community** brings empire into context.



### "Sharing Bread":

#### A Response to the Economic Crisis

General Council is making available a focused, time-limited initiative to address the distress many Canadians are experiencing during the current economic crisis. In "sharing bread," the community recognizes God's abundant gifts for the well-being of the entire human family.



#### **Values to be Sustained in the projects:**

- Responds to real needs.
- Multi-dimensional response (spiritual, pastoral, material, and fosters social and ecological justice).
- Fosters respectful, inclusive, and just relationships.
- Participating in cooperative and collaborative efforts and partnerships with ecumenical, interfaith, and other community organizations to carry out this work.
- Money is matched or other funding also sought.
- Projects contribute to the capacity of individuals and households to strengthen their financial independence and interdependence
- Projects reflect "out of the box," creative and imaginative thinking.
- Grants are one-time only

**More information will be forthcoming from the General Council to all Pastoral Charges**