



August 4, 2024

## From the Addiction & Recovery Taskforce: All those calendars

This time of year, many of us are getting an overload of calendars from a lot of good organizations. Instead of throwing them away, may we suggest you take them to your church and get a collection of them for your pastor to take to your association fall meeting. Your unwanted calendars mean a great deal as a gift to incarcerated men and women. The Addiction & Recovery Pen Pal program will collect and distribute them. Thanks for your help with this ministry.



## Church World Service Needs More Kits!

The month of May set a record, marking the highest incidence of severe storms reported in the US in more than a decade. In the past month, CWS has distributed more than 2,000 kits and buckets to our neighbors in need. Therefore, the inventory is very low.

This is why your support of CWS Kits is so crucial. This is a good time to begin planning for your next CWS kit project. Your support truly does make a difference in the lives of others when they're facing difficult times.

Remember to apply for the \$250 mini-grant from the national UCC Global H.O.P.E. You can find the information here:  
<https://www.ucc.org/seven-ways-you-can-get-involved-in-disaster-ministries/>

## A word from the Conference Minister

*One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?"*

John 6:1-21

Everyone relies on community in some way or another. Everyone. Rich or poor. Urban or rural or somewhere in between. No one person can do everything required to survive and thrive. Despite the tyranny of individualism by which we live, we were created in the image of God whose fundamental nature is expressed in the connectedness of all things. From the very beginning, all species have worked together in beneficial ways to survive.

Christian scripture and tradition returns to this life organizing principle again and again. All four Gospels contain some version of the miracle of the "loaves and fishes." Without the willingness of the few who shared the little they had, that miracle could not have taken place. Countless commentators have proposed that the "miracle" was the generosity lying dormant within the crowds. I wonder what miracles are lying dormant in some of the congregations around our conference?

Jesus' example of mutual aid was so inspirational to Dorothy Day that she called her book about the Catholic Worker movement "Loaves and Fishes". She wrote, "Young people say, What good can one person do? What is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time; we can be responsible only for the one action of the present moment. But we can beg for an increase of love in our hearts that will vitalize and transform all our individual actions, and know that God will take them and multiply them like loaves and fishes."

Bring the love of your heart and your individual action now. To your congregation, your Association, and to the places you live. You may not think that either is enough to be vital and transformative. But God can take what we share among ourselves and make from it a miracle to give hope to the world.

May it be so,  
Pastor Bill

Rev. William P. Worley, PSE Conference Minister