



Rev. Dr. Stephanie Weiner,  
Associate Conference Minister

## Prayer

By Stephanie Weiner

God of our ancestors,  
Be our vision.  
God of the harvest,  
We thank you  
For the laborer  
In the field.  
May we pay  
A fair price.

Productive God,  
We thank you  
For those on  
Assembly lines.  
May we recognize  
All labor.

God of all who  
Work  
Behind the scenes;  
Late at night;  
In difficult and  
Dangerous places.  
May we not  
Take their labor  
For granted.

God of those  
Who  
Create,  
Administer and

# A Conference E-Pistle

Brought to you by Our Church's Wider Mission

Reflections From  
The Indiana-Kentucky Conference



Sept. 5, 2016

Labor Day holds a special place on the calendar and in my heart. It was created by the labor movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and became a federal holiday in 1894. Dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers, the Department of Labor says it "constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity and well-being of our country."

For me, it conjures up the images of a great uncle who lost his life building a bridge over the Mississippi River, a friend who lost his sanity "working on the line," shopkeepers who lost time with family staying open to make ends meet, migrant workers who I saw picking in the fields this week, and the folks who watch my mom so that I can sleep - so many people working and as our sacred text says, "worthy of their wages." (Luke 10:7)

Paul Hodgson wrote for Fortune (6/22/15) that between 1978 and 2014, the inflation adjusted CEO pay increased almost 1,000% according to a 2015 report by the Economic Policy Institute. Typical workers in the U.S. saw a pay raise of 11% for the same period. The ratio between the average American CEO and worker pay was 303 to one in 2015 - lower than its peak of 376 to one in 2000, but higher than the 1965 ratio of 20 to one.

I have been reading the biography and writings of pastor and prophet William Sloane Coffin. He quotes Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, "We can have a democracy or we can have great wealth concentrated in the heads of the few. We cannot have both." He also writes, "Had I but one wish for the churches of America, I think it would be that they come to see the difference between charity and justice. Charity is a matter of personal attributes; justice a matter of public policy. Charity seeks to alleviate the effects of injustice; justice seeks to eliminate the causes of it. Charity in no way affects the status quo, while justice leads inevitably to political confrontation."

"Especially would I hope that Christians would see that the compassion that moved the Good Samaritan to act charitably - that same compassion prompted biblical prophets to confront

Adjudicate  
Our laws,  
May they be  
Just  
As well as  
Compassionate.

Until that time  
When  
Justice rolls down  
Like waters and  
Righteousness  
Like an ever-flowing  
Stream.

In the name of  
Jesus the Prophet,  
Jesus the Christ,  
We pray.

Amen.

injustice, to speak truth to power, as did Jesus, who, though more than a prophet, was certainly nothing less." (Credo, pg. 63)

How many of us know and love the story of the Good Samaritan? How many of us cringe at the prophets words?

Have a thoughtful (and safe and happy) Labor Day!

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## Closing

### Mission Pilgrimage Opportunity

First Congregational UCC in Indianapolis invites you to be a part of their upcoming trip to Nicaragua, taking place Oct. 18-26. The delegation is scheduled to visit the Council of Evangelical Churches for Denominational Alliance (CEPAD), a Global Ministries' partner in Nicaragua. CEPAD has a unique strategy for supporting vulnerable communities in Nicaragua. The aim is to share expertise, encouragement and resources in a manner that creates self-sufficiency and sustainability.

The cost is \$1,500 per person and commitment must be made by Sept. 12 with a \$200 deposit to reserve your space. For more information about this mission pilgrimage, contact [Michael Montgomery](#).

Sincerely,

Indiana-Kentucky Conference  
United Church of Christ  
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The Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ was selected as a Constant Contact All Star in 2011, 2012 & 2013

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