

*CRIBB<S>NOTE – March 1, 2009*

We are very pleased to welcome to our sanctuary *Oikos*. This talented group of musicians and artists includes the Rev. Cliff Aerie, saxophones, Dr. Chris Bakriganes, piano, Kristin Korb, vocals, Henry Franklin, bass, and Fritz Wise, drums. They have traveled from Cleveland, Ohio, to worship with us. Cliff is on the staff of the United Church of Christ national ministries, and is Minister for Special Events, Creativity and the Arts. He is our preacher today.

Bringing a new sound into the sanctuary is a wonderful gift. We are invited to allow our souls to bathe in the sweet tones that flow throughout our worship service. Further, as the Spirit moves us, lift every voice and sing with the joy and gladness that honor our love for God. In this special worship, we are aware of the presence of others who give praises to God. We are so very blessed and give thanks for this sacred time of worship and celebration.

There is no place more important and necessary for us to be than in the House of Prayer. These special days of health, financial, and personal challenges remind us of our interdependence on each other and our complete reliance on God. This Season of Lent provides an intentional direction toward the Holy as we prepare for Easter.

Truly, the world awaits a compassionate community to share in the ways that make for peace. We have come into this sanctuary as a people committed to alternative understandings of human relationships. We come as witnesses to God's love and mercy. We lift our voices in defense of the muted and the weary. We advocate for those who are disenfranchised and discouraged.

Just as Jesus brought hope to those who suffer, we stand in solidarity with others who search for life's true meaning. Music is a balm that soothes our souls and gives us energy. Sacred jazz elevates our inner-being and touches the deep recesses beneath the surface of our appearance.

We are especially grateful that *Oikos* is leading us into a space that draws us nearer to God. As we listen, sing, and participate in worship, we will discover the intertwining presence of Oneness; God with us. Each of us is joined to the other. We sense an unusual clarity about Reality. Music combined with the spoken word make us aware of our corporate responsibility to diligently attend to the cares of God's Creation.

In this sacred moment, let us re-visit our Covenant with God and share the vision of a world made new in which children play cheerfully without fear and elders walk unafraid. Let us imagine a world without war and all God's people live without shame. The hungry are fed and those who thirst are sated. The sound of sacred jazz inspires us to go boldly, confidently, and peaceably into the world with a proclamation of Good News.

Let the music play with gratitude, appreciation, and thanksgiving to *Oikos* for bringing wonderful gifts to our congregation who is so familiar with good music. Thank you, Cliff and company for making the journey and taking the time to be with us. Peace!