

July 14, 2019
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Caring Neighbors
Luke 10:25-37

The Good Samaritan story reminds us that Christ calls us to draw a wider circle as we bring compassion, healing, and hope to others. The 3 Great Loves initiative is giving congregations across the denomination a forum for sharing stories about the way that they are practicing being Good Samaritans.

Congregations like Spring Creek UCC in Rockford, IL. Since December 2015, the congregation has provided household goods and supplies to ten families moving from homelessness into an apartment through their Adopt An Apartment Initiative (AAA). “The generosity of the congregation in donating items has been outstanding and we are very grateful to our dedicated group of volunteers who have helped to transport the items and clean & stage the apartments,” the congregation reports.

Hadwen Park Congregational UCC, Worcester, MA reaches out to LGBT people escaping from countries where it is illegal and dangerous to be themselves. These asylum seekers are unable to work or receive public assistance while awaiting asylum, so the congregation gives them a shared apartment, food, cell phone, a small stipend, help finding medical care and legal representation. The asylum seekers are also into the church community for spiritual care and a sense of community and friendship. The congregation has supported as many as two dozen asylum seekers at a time.

Zion United Church of Christ, in Hubbard, Iowa has extended their definition of neighbor to include those living 2000 miles away. The rural congregation is demonstrating love of neighbor by collecting over 1,100 needed items for two UCLA Mobile Health Clinics for the homeless living in Los Angeles. Zion UCC has provided travel sized bottles of shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, as well as underwear, flashlights, shoes, and many other necessary and much needed items to their neighbors.

These congregations, and many others, are redrawing the lines of what it means to be a neighbor, drawing the circle ever wider. How is your congregation a Good Samaritan? Tell your story!

3 Great Loves is the United Church of Christ’s denomination-wide storytelling initiative. Telling the story of how we are living out God’s love and expressing love of neighbor, children and creation, 3 Great Loves demonstrates how our denomination lives out the love of God and creates a just world for all.

Visit www.3greatloves.org and share how you are living out God’s love. And use the hashtag #3greatloves when sharing on social media. No action is too small, and no story is too insignificant to share.