

St John United Church of Christ
Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
September 2, 2007

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

June 9—5th anniversary of my ordination to pastoral ministry
50th anniversary stole of UCC

stole and robe are symbols of the pastoral role

stole—shaped like a yoke symbolic of scriptural
image of service that Jesus showed when
washing feet of disciples, Jesus' own giving
of himself, reminder of duty to tell the good
news about Jesus

robe—symbolizes the pastoral role and wearing it
reminds us of that and not the person
wearing it—it's about God and not Barbara

These two symbols were not part of my memories of God as a child—I grew up in the Pentecostal church until I was eleven and then was Nazarene as a teen and young adult...that's how I ended up at Olivet.

Three distinct faith communities/churches

Having spent well over half my life in the UCC, I also realize that a deep part of who I am and who I know God to be stems from those formative years in two small communities of people who took seriously the charge set forth in Hebrews.

Read passage.

Charge to ancient congregation

- Mutual...shared, common, reciprocal, public as opposed private...love
- Hospitality
- remember those in prison...as if you were in prison with them
- remember those being tortured...as if you were being tortured
- commitment, using marriage as an example—remember marriage in ancient times was not a marriage of mutuality...men held all the cards and women were property
- be free of the love of money and be content with what you have
- do not neglect to do good and share what you have

Promise—God will never leave you nor forsake you

Three distinct communities of faith nurtured me

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- commitment
- hospitality
- doing good
- caring and showing mutual love

Today we come to the table where Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, left for us an everlasting reminder of this charge from Hebrews

This I believe.