



UCCSA Newsletter

United Congregational Church of Southern Africa

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Revs. Dawn and Jon Barnes

Jonathan and Dawn Barnes are missionaries with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, South Africa. They served as development officers in the Kei Region of the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

Two weeks ago they returned to the United States for a home visit. They will soon return to start a new assignment within the UCCSA.

The following article has been written by them some time ago as part of their communication with the church in the USA.

New Beginnings:

"If you desire peace, cultivate justice, but at the same time cultivate the fields to produce more bread; otherwise there will be no peace." Norman Borlaug

The quote above is from the website www.hungersite.com. It is a website that donates cups of food to the hungry around the world if you simply go there and click. And one day, as we were on the website, this quote struck us and made us really think about what our role will be to bring about peace.

As we think about peace and the part God has called us to play in our world, many issues come to mind: the crisis in Zimbabwe, Gaza, our parenting skills, the Congo, and violations of human rights such as Guantanamo Bay.

At first, it simply seems overwhelming. Especially in the face of catastrophes such as Zimbabwe and Gaza, it is easy to feel powerless. But when we start to feel helpless, all we need to do is look around at the place where God has called us to serve. We can do our part to fight injustices here in the Kei Region of the Eastern Cape. We can give of ourselves to the congregations of

the United Congregational Church, both physically and spiritually.

We can reach out to those who are HIV+ at the Samaritan Care Centre, and we can help plant spinach in vegetable tunnels. We can spend time with our kids, making sure that they always know that they are loved.

That is how we can begin to bring peace in the place where God has placed us. We cannot change every situation in every land, but can do our part just where we are. What about you? Where has God put you? And what are the situations around you where you can take a stand on the side of justice and peace?

As we look forward to the changes and challenges ahead, remembering the Easter season which teaches us to have hope even when things seem hopeless, may we seek ways to sow seeds for justice, peace and for bread, and may the Lord of the harvest bless us and be with us.

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UCCSA STATEMENT ON GAZA BLOCKADE

The Israeli attack and blockade of humanitarian aid to Gaza

The United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) wishes to express its dismay at the attack on ships bringing humanitarian aid into Gaza. We were shocked at the use of violence against people whose stated purpose was to bring food, medicine and other goods to a people who live under poverty due to the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

The UCCSA believes that the blockade of Gaza is immoral and illegal and has led to untold suffering for the Palestinian people. We call on the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to take measures to stop this aggression by the state of Israel.

We express our deepest sympathy to the families of those who were killed in this act of Israeli terrorism and our continued solidarity with the people of Gaza and the Palestinian nation in their quest for justice.

The UCCSA Calls on the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) governments to unequivocally denounce the actions of the state of Israel. We urge our governments to apply visible diplomatic pressure to ensure that Israel adheres to international law and respect for human life.

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UCCSA Meets with the Leadership of the UPCSA

Our Assembly in Boksburg was arranged to coincide with the General Assembly of the PCSA in the same town. On both agendas was the final vote to unite the two Denominations. The UCCSA voted in favour while the PCSA voted against union. Some of us were left with deep feelings of pain and rejection which lasted for a long time.

In the meantime the PCSA united with the RPC to form the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa. The Uniting in their name opens the door for the other two Presbyterian Churches to enter union with them. We have moved on to establish five Synods with a Vision Plan to give direction to the UCCSA. As part of the Vision Plan we have placed an important thrust on ecumenical engagement. As a result the Officers of the denomination were charged to meet with the Officers of the UPCSA to discuss future co-operation between the two Denominations.

We met on the 3 June 2010 at "Tiyo Soga House." During this meeting we were both amazed as to how similar we are. We also recognized some of the ways we are currently cooperating, including the regular prayer events between the denominational offices, the United Churches and through our common engagement in the ecumenical movement.

Our meeting made me think what would have happened to us if we did unite? Would we have lost our "identity" or would we have been enriched by the experience? Would we have had plans to revisit our understanding of church and particular being a Congregational Church? Would we have re-visited our understanding of Congregationalism and what our forebears stood for?

The Officers of the UPCSA did formally apologise for what happened nearly thirty years ago and the pain caused by the decision. They were also humbled by the fact that the UCCSA approached them to have talks about future co operation. During this meeting we shared our different histories and the way in which we operate now. I discovered that we have a very rich history which goes back a very long way.

Rev. Hendrick Pillay (UCCSA President)



A STATEMENT BY THE SOUTH
AFRICAN COUNCIL OF
CHURCHES

REMEMBER THE POOR

Arguably the greatest sin of our day is our failure to care for the poor and to deal effectively with the menace of poverty.

That failure – of compassion and of justice – underlies all the other great sins of our day: war, greed, abuse, violence, drug peddling, human trafficking, environmental destruction, crime... The list goes on.

God cares especially for the poor, yet we appear unconcerned.

We invite visitors to South Africa to see beyond the soccer stadiums. To see the people of South Africa, their talents and achievements – and in many cases their destitution. To see the true state of the economy. To remember us and our needs when the season of soccer tourism is over. We invite you to take a closer look, to ask questions and to raise your voices about the reality.

The world over, we have the capacity to make poverty history, yet we are not doing it. In South Africa, the sin is double. Why?

- Because we speak of the struggle against apartheid, but have neither undone the harm entrenched by that system nor built the just society for which we fought.
- Because of all African countries, we have the material resources to address the scandal of poverty – yet we have allowed ourselves to become the most unequal society in the world.
- Because eliminating poverty is a stated public policy objective in South Africa, yet we are not doing as we say.
- Because we boast of our culture of ubuntu without treating others humanely.
- Because we have failed to resist the impact of globalisation on our economic life.

The Soccer World Cup may make matters of poverty worse and deepen our sin. Much of South Africa's economy runs on the basis that those with power and wealth increase their comfort by exploiting the needy: through cheap labour, land acquisition, diverting public funds into their own pockets and so forth. For all the public noise about how the World Cup will benefit this country, there are many signs that it will only benefit an

elite and may deepen the destitution of many others. Some studies suggest that further attacks on the poor are simply being held over until after the excitement of the soccer and the observers have left.

We live in dangerous times and we fear for our future if we remain as divided and unconcerned as we are today.

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Heal Zimbabwe, church urges government:

Church leaders in Zimbabwe have put out an urgent call to the government to renew its commitment to improving the standard of living for Zimbabwean citizens.

Members of the Zimbabwe Christian Alliance and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches said they want to see the government delivering on the goals laid out in the country's Global Political Agreement - a mandate that aims to get the country back on its feet.

So far, church leaders are claiming not enough has been achieved.

In a statement released at a special gathering of Christian leaders and members of key civic society organisations in Harare, church leaders said: " It is our prayer and demand that the inclusive government must create a conducive environment to ensure that all citizens of Zimbabwe enjoy life in its abundance and fullness.

"We acknowledge the progress made so far to implement parts of the Global Political Agreement that has led to partial stabilisation of the economy. We also acknowledge the attempts made by the SADC mediation teams to ensure that there is full implementation of the GPA.

"However, we note with concern, that the GPA has not been fully implemented. "

Church chiefs want to see big leaps made in improving spiralling poverty, unemployment and health and education sectors as well as efforts made to ensure people on low incomes get enough food.

They also want more progress on tackling potential political violence and intimidation and violence towards human rights activists.

"We continue to pray to the Almighty God and encourage the Christian community and the people of Zimbabwe to actively participate in bringing about good

governance, healing, reconciliation, peace and prosperity to our country," church leaders said.

They also urged the government to pave the way for elections to take place in Zimbabwe at the end of 2011.

"The GPA is a transitional mechanism for the democratisation of Zimbabwe, which we will not allow to be permanent," church leaders said. "We therefore demand that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit in August 2010 ensures that the elections are conducted in 2011. We call upon the SADC Heads of State Summit in Windhoek Namibia in August 2010 to prioritise addressing these concerns for the people of Zimbabwe."

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Response to the articles written by Rev. Bruce Theron and Rev. Majaha Nhliziyo



Dear Editor : from André September (UCCSA Immediate Past President)

I read the article written by Mr Bruce Theron with great interest, and even more so the response by Mr Majaha Nhliziyo. Unfortunately, I do not have the benefit of Ms Baatjies' article.

Allow me to make a few observations and remarks:

I appreciate the effort that Mr Theron had made in putting the matter of a caring church within the common domain of the UCCSA as a point of reflection, even debate and hopefully prayer and action. While Mr Nhliziyo raised some questions on Mr Theron's interrogatory contention that programmes that were attempted had come to nought, I would not even hesitate to argue from both a philosophical as well as an experiential point of view that nothing attempted can ever come to nought.

Also, I would want to give Mr Theron the benefit of the doubt – in that I assume he refers to the UCCSA through time and not just the present. In each and every case, one needs to measure the level of success and failure, lessons learned, experiences gained and new insights acquired.

Given the diversity within the UCCSA as well as sometimes our own ignorance of what is happening in other realities such as local churches and Synods, anyone who thinks he or she can easily draw these kinds of authoritative conclusions and make blanket statements in the context of the UCCSA, is not truthful, objective or realistic. Therefore, a humble and learning

disposition will suit all of us better. So, I find that kind of general argument representing one person's conclusion on a programme without being aware of or appreciating the impact on perhaps a local church or minister in another reality not even worthy of a response.

It is also not the first time that Mr Theron publicly asserted his concern for the silence of the Church when there was an expectation on his part that the prophetic and comforting voice of the Church was needed to be heard loud and clearly. I can recall him putting forward a similar argument when the Executive met at Springdale a few years back and when former President Thabo Mbeki was in town at the same time. It is, however, not good enough for leaders in the Church, especially ordained ministers, to continue asking these questions at what seems an academic level and making these almost rhetorical assertions. They are not spectators, but catalysts that should rather focus on how to strengthen the responsiveness of the Church, and I am not just referring to the UCCSA office in Brixton or the General Secretary, but more to what these leaders say and do in their own communities as a voice of comfort, caring and galvanizing action. Hopefully a lot of good is being done.

On the other hand, and I must respectfully admit, I found Mr Nhliziyo's response to the article somewhat reactionary. It is important that we continuously reflect on our understanding of the church, even more so, the mission of the church. Inspired by, in particular, the Scriptural imperative of loving our neighbour, we declared the hope, for the UCCSA to be manifested as a caring church. Hence, it is equally critical for the Church to continue challenging itself, and welcomes any challenge on how far it has come in manifesting what we discern as a central tenet of God's mission of which we are the earthen vessels.

Theologically, there is not much to argue against Mr Theron's definition of the church. If it was his contention that his "quite simply" understanding was all that there was to understanding the church in its multifaceted glory, that would have been an over simplification of the very nature of our being as the church. However, from the article he wrote, he did not say that or purported to suggest likewise.

In any case, although Mr Nhliziyo came to the conclusion that "it follows therefore", there is really no lucid connection that he had established between what he listed as the marks of the church, Christ as the Head of the Church, and as a result the UCCSA to be a "caring church". That makes the intervention of Mr Theron and I would assume Ms Baatjies so more relevant and opportune, in that we are able to reflect and determine whether we are indeed a caring church,

not because we simply so declared or because we profess Christ as the Head of the Body. Thus, reading the first article in the Newsletter of May 2010, I was excited to note the launch of the new publication, "Issues of Faith" for local churches and members to share their stories with the rest of the church and the world. With this initiative, I believe, we will be able to discern the nature of our church, and I think we shall be happily surprised when learning of all the different experiences.

I also did not think Mr Theron was trying to make a case for "cheque book relationships". He raised some critical issues on the signs of the time, although at a very superficial level. I hope the church, lay ministers and ordained ministers, will start to seriously reflect on these issues so we deepen our understanding of the challenges facing church and society and discern what it means to be the Church of Christ during these challenging times.

Mr Nhliziyo offered some extremely pertinent comments on the multi-dimensional nature of the challenges facing church and society today and the need for a more holistic approach to dealing with them.

In the context of the quest to be a caring church, and while dealing with the "big issues" of "root causes", it is necessary also to note that some members of our church languish in abject poverty, while local churches, regions and Synods maintain huge and impressive investment portfolios (I am not arguing against investment per se, but want to raise the flag for a more caring diaconal ministry);

members go hungry to bed regularly (including some church workers while some of their colleagues live ostentatiously) because they are unemployed and have no income while few in the church seem to care; members struggle to keep their children in school and in some instances have to pull them out of school because they cannot afford the cost of education (including feeding their children properly); members have no shelter to protect their families from the vagaries of nature (including some church workers);

members perish from a lack of access to basic healthcare or preventable diseases simply because they cannot get to the clinics or doctors (not to talk about the exorbitant cost of private healthcare);

we are a church with huge income disparities among local churches, regions and synods, and at times it seems many of us are either not aware of this reality or it does not move us sufficiently to want to care and do something about the plight of our fellow brothers and sisters in the same family of the UCCSA. So, the

question we have to ask ourselves is, how do we measure up (literally and figuratively speaking) against the fellowship of the early Church where they had everything in common, selling their possessions and goods to give to those in need, vigilant enough to observe that some were not sitting at the common table of fellowship, especially some of the widows, and made every effort for them also to get their daily distribution of basic essentials (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37; 6:1-7).

Perhaps, then, we will not be so quick to defend. One could try and argue that these early Christians did this, as they believed the coming of Jesus Christ was imminent, but even so, what does it say to the church today?

Lastly, our leaders should show restraint and not always jump in the defence of the Church, which in most instances simply amounts to blowing our own trumpets. Instead, we should be the ones welcoming public reflection, initiate such discussions and skilfully influence the debate, whenever necessary – not stifle reflection or go on counterattack. In this regard we should do more in picking up the themes and issues raised in the General Secretary's Reports to the Church.

If we are able to create a welcoming, comforting and nurturing public space of reflection for people to pray and talk to one another in a dignified and respectful manner, members of the church themselves will defend whatever there is to defend. Hence, I implore editors at both Synod and Denominational level to encourage members of the church to contribute freely, to these discourses.

WCC welcomes coming into being of new World Communion

On 18 June, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) will merge with the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) to form the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). The new ecumenical body will group 227 member churches representing 80 million Christians in 108 countries.

"The coming into being of the World Communion of Reformed Churches will be a historic moment for the churches of the Reformed family and for the church of Christ everywhere", said the World Council of Churches general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, who will attend the uniting event.

"This is a new expression of the visible unity of God's church, and as such it represents both a gift from God and a sign of hope", Tveit added. "I trust that it will

strengthen the contribution of the Reformed churches to unity, peace and justice."

The uniting meeting between the world's two largest networks of Protestant churches in the Reformed tradition will take place in Grand Rapids, United States, 18-26 June. Some 475 delegates, and almost as many observers, guests, visitors and volunteers are expected to participate.

"The term 'communion' in the new organization's name points to a new form of working relationship," says the Rev. Dr Setri Nyomi, WARC general secretary. "As a communion, we recognize our common baptism and our togetherness at the Lord's table - making us better witnesses and more effective in making a difference in the world."

The two founding organizations say they draw on distinctive but complementary traditions. While both share the Reformed commitment to biblical tradition, REC is known for its emphasis on spiritual development and faithfulness to church "Confessions" (statements which define points of faith) while WARC is known for its stances on issues such as racial and gender justice, environmental protection and a just and equitable world economic order.

"In these times of division and dissension in so many areas of our lives – including church life – it is highly significant that two global groups of churches [...] should be willing to come together in a higher level of union than ever before," says REC general secretary Rev. Dr Richard van Houten.

The mandate of the new World Communion of Reformed Churches will be to focus on issues of church unity and social programmes. The staff will be based in Geneva, Switzerland at the Ecumenical Centre which also houses the World Council of Churches, with which the WCRC will be in a relationship of cooperation.

The programme for the uniting event features debate of a wide range of issues of concern to member churches. From these, delegates will set specific priorities for the coming seven-year period leading up to the next global assembly.

Douglas Chial

You may not know me, but I know everything about you...Psalm 139:1

I know when you sit down and when you rise up...Psalm 139:2

I am familiar with all your ways...Psalm 139:3

Even the very hairs on your head are numbered...Matthew 10:29-31

For you were made in my image...Genesis 1:27

In me you live and move and have your being...Acts 17:28

Church turns up heat on Jamaica gun crisis:

Church leaders in Jamaica are continuing to put pressure on their government to respond effectively to the ongoing gun battles in the capital Kingston.



Rev Dr Collin Cowan, general secretary of the United Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands (UCJCI) said the country's leaders still needed to be challenged over their response to escalating violence in the city sparked by a police search for drugs lord

Christopher 'Dudus' Coke.

"There is sustained pressure for the truth to unfold and for leadership with integrity to emerge. The Church remains an active participant in the search for solutions," he said.

As tensions continue to mount, ministers from the country's Umbrella Group of Churches have been invited to meet with Jamaican Prime Minister Bruce Golding for crisis talks.

Dr Cowan added: "The crisis continues and tensions are still high, especially in the Western Kingston area where the State of Emergency is being felt most severely. In the meantime, the United Church continues its efforts at maintaining a pastoral presence in the most affected communities. Our nine congregations in the area are busily involved in attending to the needs of the people. All our congregations across the island have been alerted to respond to our relief operation and the response is positive."

Kingston's deprived Tivoli Gardens district became a battle-field after security forces mounted aggressive searches for drugs trafficker Coke on 21 May. The search got underway after the prime minister said he would endorse Coke's extradition to the US on drugs trafficking offences. But police have come up against fierce retaliation from Coke's supporters in violent gun battles that have left 44 civilians dead.

People have not been allowed out of their homes to get food, water or other essential supplies and a strict curfew is in place between 6am and 6pm. UCJCI leaders have set up three distribution centres for food and other basic necessities, but they have warned that there is so much more that needs to be done.

Dr Cowan added: "We believe that the State of Emergency should be sustained, while due care be given to minimize the casualties. We are committed to offer our best leadership in the process towards a speedy and appropriate resolution to the present crisis.

We will continue our prayers for healing and hope for all Jamaicans, for the most vulnerable among us, for law and order to be restored and for the economy to receive fresh wings. We ask you to join us in prayer."

Haitians rebuild their churches, look towards the future with hope



The holy places of Haiti were not spared by the devastating January 12th earthquake.

Throughout the capital city, Port-au-Prince, many churches are rebuilding out of the rubble.

The Holy Trinity Cathedral, one of the landmarks of the city known for its beautiful murals painted by famous Haitian artists, was among those churches that collapsed during the earthquake.

Only the ruins of the church are left, but the plan is to rebuild the church again.

"Haiti will come back," Father Ogé Beauvoir from the Holy Trinity Church said while speaking with the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), who visited the ruins of the church together with an ecumenical delegation of six church leaders from different parts of the world.

"Fellowship is the answer to the challenges we are facing today," Tveit told Father Beauvoir, assuring him of the ecumenical movement's support in building a new post-earthquake Haiti.

The purpose of the ecumenical visit was to express solidarity and offer pastoral support to the churches as they participate in the rebuilding of Haiti and in offering their service to the Haitian people.

Churches play an important role

Since the earthquake, Haiti has received support and accompaniment from churches all around the world. The Haitian churches have encouraged the WCC to continue its support on a long-term basis.

One of the concerns of the general secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, Mr Gerard Granado, has been the lack of co-operation between the different agencies responding to the earthquake.

"There are lots of actors doing lots of things, but they have never come together to share resources for the

benefit of the Haitian people. The earthquake has been an eye-opener in that sense," he asserted.

In his prayer in the collapsed Russian Orthodox School, Granado assured Father Jean-Chénier Dumais of the Haitian Orthodox Mission that the work doesn't end now. Instead, he said, we will share these experiences together and we will together ask for strength to rebuild Haiti after the tragedy.

"Churches play an important role and they have enormous influence," said the Rev. Carlos Ham, WCC programme executive for the Latin America and Caribbean region. The role of the churches is to raise awareness of the situation and to pray for the Haitians, he said.

The visit to church buildings of different denominations that were destroyed in the quake was one concrete way the ecumenical team expressed solidarity towards the Haitians, he continued.

Long-term commitment is needed

In a panel discussion on Tuesday involving representatives from several Haitian denominations, the ecumenical delegation shared their thoughts about the role of churches, emphasizing that the church must respond on all levels of reconstruction and remain in the community long-term.

"Without churches the progress is not long-term," observed the Rev. Nilton Giese, general secretary of the Latin American Council of Churches.

When it comes to concrete aid work, the task has been given to the ACT Alliance, which is an alliance of churches and church-related organizations working together in humanitarian assistance, development and advocacy.

"ACT has been strong in Haiti since the beginning of 2000," said Prosperity Raymond, the country representative of Christian Aid, a member of the ACT Alliance. "After the earthquake, we were able to start working together and supporting each other due to good co-operation and collaboration in the past."

The panelists agreed that the role of the churches is to speak on behalf of those who need assistance and support and to work together to benefit the people, particularly those in need.

"There are two tasks for the churches," Tveit said. "One is to be able to say what needs to be changed and the other is to interpret the vision revealing how to make that change. What churches and the ACT Alliance can

do together is to help make the voices of the people heard on different levels."

Common hope for the future

In the courtyard of the collapsed Church of God the reconstruction work is under way. The four-floor building collapsed just before a service was about to take place. The choir members were able to run out through a hole in the wall, but the church lost two of its members.

Members of the Church of God are clearing rubble in the blazing sunshine during the hottest time of the day. For delegation members, this is a sign of real commitment to God and neighbour.

"The demolishing was started right after the earthquake, because we want to get people back here," Brother Saül Raphaël from the Church of God told the ecumenical delegation.

In two days the congregation will have its first service in the roofless space. Hearing this impresses the delegation.

"I want to thank you sisters and brothers from different parts of the world for sharing with us this very special situation. I can assure you that you are in our prayers," Tveit said to the members of the church while in their sanctuary. "It is encouraging to see the hope for the future. That is hope that we can share together."

(Maria Halava, from ACT Alliance, reported from Haiti)



World Council of Churches

What is the World Council of Churches?

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It is a community of churches on the way to visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ. It seeks to advance towards this unity, as Jesus prayed for his followers, "so that the world may believe." (John 17:21)

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement, a movement whose goal is Christian unity.

The WCC brings together 349 churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 560 million Christians and including most of the world's Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches. While the bulk of the WCC's founding churches were European and North American, today most member churches are in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific.

For its member churches, the WCC is a unique space: one in which they can reflect, speak, act, worship and work together, challenge and support each other, share and debate with each other. As members of this fellowship, WCC member churches:

- are called to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship;
- promote their common witness in work for mission and evangelism;
- engage in Christian service by serving human need, breaking down barriers between people, seeking justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation; and
- foster renewal in unity, worship, mission and service.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Please keep Rev Bukashe & children in your prayers.

Mrs. Barbara Bukashe the wife of Rev. Edgar Bukashe is not so well. She was recently admitted to St Georges hospital in Port Elizabeth but is now back at home. She suffers loss of memory. Doctors advised Edgar that there's nothing they can do for her. They have also asked the family to make peace with her condition.

Father's Day Prayer and Meditation

May we remember in our prayers and meditations to be thankful and grateful for the father figures in our lives.

Father's Day gives us a special opportunity to make this a time to do something to show appreciation for the past and present father figures in our lives.

Here is a special prayer to include in your meditations -

Fathers everywhere -
We honor you and wish to say
May God's blessings be with you
In a special way today!

From a father's strength
We learn so we may teach
Our children to be kind and caring
With everyone they meet.

When times are rough
Your guiding hand points the way to go
May we follow in your footsteps
Right from wrong our actions show.

Now, on this Father's Day
Our tributes go to you
Fathers, grandpas, uncles, brothers
All our dear friends, too.

Susan Kramer

Life Lessons

You may have thought I didn't see,
Or that I hadn't heard,
Life lessons that you taught to me,
But I got every word.

Perhaps you thought I missed it all,
And that we'd grow apart,
But Dad, I picked up everything,
It's written on my heart.

Without you, Dad, I wouldn't be
The (woman)(man) I am today;
You built a strong foundation
No one can take away.

I've grown up with your values,
And I'm very glad I did;
So here's to you, dear father,
From your forever grateful kid.

By Joanna Fuchs

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