

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nurturing Spiritual Growth and Working for Social Justice

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Newsletter published monthly for Community United Church of Christ (CUCC) members and friends
Pastor: Steve Halsted Newsletter Editorial Board: Vandy Bradow, Carol Clark, and Susan Lane

A Word from the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Did you know that the first "Earth Day" took place on April 22, 1970? That means we are approaching the 35th Anniversary of Earth Day! I did a little research on its history. We can thank Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.) for proposing the first Earth Day. He writes, "My primary objective in planning Earth Day was to show the political leadership of the Nation that there was broad and deep support for the environmental movement. While I was confident that a nationwide peaceful demonstration of concern would be impressive, I was not quite prepared for the overwhelming response that occurred on that day. Two thousand colleges and universities, ten thousand high schools and grade schools, and several thousand communities in all, more than twenty million Americans participated in one of the most exciting and significant grassroots efforts in the history of this country."

It is significant to note that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established in December 1970, and that the anti-war "teach-in" model of the late 1960's was deliberately chosen by Senator Nelson to organize Earth Day in what he called an "Environmental teach-in." This approach proved to be extremely successful, as it forced the

issue of the environment into the political dialogue of the country.

Unfortunately, in my mind, the religious dialogue on the issue of the environment has not been as widespread. Unlike in our congregation, there has been little interest in most faith communities. Perhaps saving souls has left no time for the broader meaning of John 3:16 which begins, "God so loved the WORLD..." Yet, perhaps it is time now, almost 34 years after the first Earth Day, to do a "teach-in" for the interfaith community in Raleigh. To that end, I am chairing an event sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance of Wake County on this year's Earth Day, April 22, at Shaw University Chapel from 7-9pm. A Forum will present panelists from a variety of faith perspectives (Jewish, Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, Jain, and Native American) on their respective scriptures, theology, and ethical principles that inform them on environmental issues. You all are invited to attend! We plan to have refreshments and music to celebrate Earth Day. Hope to see you there!

Blessings and Peace,
Steve



Church Council

Church Council will be meeting on April 1 (No, nothing to do with April Fools' Day!), after our congregational meeting on March 28. For more details or to bring business to Council's attention for the next meeting, contact **Karen Haley**, Moderator, at 785-3005.

Many of us enjoyed fellowship with Cary's Good Shepherd United Church of Christ for a soup dinner and Ash Wednesday service February 25th and with The Universal Church of the Twelve Apostles (EUDA) for the celebration of EUDA's forty-ninth anniversary. We will be having Maundy Thursday dinner here with Good Shepherd on April 8 at 6:00 p.m., followed by worship.

Deacons

You are urged to attend the Saturday retreat on April 3rd from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. It has been carefully planned and will be a wonderful beginning to Holy Week. There will be various rooms with activities that will be done individually and there will be opportunities to gather as a community.

Bread making, tai chi, video, journaling/meditation, and art opportunities will be among your choices. There will be an opening worship with singing in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall at 9:30. A simple lunch will be served at noon. Communion will be served at a closing service in the fellowship hall.

On Palm Sunday we will gather outside the front door facing Dixie Trail to receive a palm frond and process into the sanctuary as a group following the Congolese singers.

Easter lilies may be purchased in honor of friends and family. Call the office to place your order by April 5. There will be a flower cross outside on Easter morning. Bring whatever flowers you have to the courtyard before service; we will place them on the cross after the 10:30 service.

Peg Hulslander, for the Deacons

Carol Kepler took the photographs on the art wall during a trip to Copper Canyon with five other members of the Monday Lunch group. The display shows some of the indigenous Raramuri in this remote and beautiful area of northwestern Mexico.

Religious Education

Preschool, Elementary Cycles End

After Easter, the **church school** classes will begin a rotation on Pentecost and confirmation, which will culminate with the children participating in the Pentecost/confirmation service on May 30. This will be the final rotation of the four-year cycle designed and written here at CUCC. What an exciting way to celebrate how far our church school has come and all of the wonderful experiences we have had together as we experience the awe and mystery of God.

Advice and Printing Requests

Gel candle making experts - If you have ever made gel candles, would you call **Suzette Roach** (460-8678) to give her some handy hints? Suzette will be leading a lesson making the candles but hasn't ever used the materials.

Memory Verse printer - If you would be willing to print two computer banners monthly with the words to that rotation's memory verse, you could be a great help to the church school. No fancy graphics required. Call **Jane Smith** (787-6539) to offer help.

Monday Lunch Group

Meetings begin with bring-your-own lunch and conversation at 12:15. About a half-hour later, there is prayer, including prayer requests received from the specially marked jars in the Narthex and Pilgrim House. The current study topic follows, ending about 1:45. The group is just ending the Lenten series and for April the topic has been chosen to be activities and discussions around the book The Color of Water. Call **Geraldine Bryan** (787-8494) for more information.

Adult Forum

All are invited to meet in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall, 9:15-10:15 a.m. each Sunday morning.

Forum Topics for April

- April 4 Clay Stalnaker on William Sloane Coffin, Pastor Emeritus, Riverside Church (NYC)
- April 11 Andrea Shapiro, founding member of Triangle Tikkun
- April 18 Dr. David Morrison, “Fuel Economy Standards: What They Could Mean for Our Future”
- April 25 To Be Announced (see Sunday bulletins)

Notes on William Sloane Coffin (April 4 topic)

Rev. Coffin gained national prominence as chaplain at Yale University for 18 years, participated in Freedom Rides during the civil rights movement, and protested the Vietnam War. It appears that he is now terminally ill, so it is fitting that the best of his writings and sermons have been excerpted and published in a small volume entitled, *Credo*, which he translates as, “I have given my heart to.” Bill Moyers, his friend and admirer, devoted about twenty minutes of his recent program NOW to an interview with Coffin on the meaning of life and death. On April 4 we will view this video and then Clay Stalnaker, a student at Yale when Coffin was there, will ruminate on Coffin’s contributions. Even if you have already seen this interview, this should be a valuable session for all of us. The time is 9:15 – 10:15 in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall.

Here are a few excerpts from *Credo*.

“The war against Iraq is as disastrous as it is unnecessary; perhaps in terms of its wisdom, justice, purpose, and motives, the worst war in American history. Of course we feel for the Iraqis so long and cruelly oppressed, and we support our military men and women; but we don’t support their military mission. They were not called to defend America but rather to attack Iraq. They were not called to die for, but rather to kill for, their country, and in an illegal and unjust war opposed by the UN Security Council and virtually the entire world. What more unpatriotic thing could we have asked of our sons and daughters serving in the military?”

“Whereas economic power helped eventually to win World War II, the war against terrorism will finally be won by economic justice. There is nothing metaphysical about terrorism. It springs from specific historical causes—political oppression and economic deprivation. Until these injustices and

our complicity and their furtherance are faced, our escalating counter violence will predictably result in more and more terrorists attacking more and more American institutions at home and abroad.”

“Socrates had it wrong; it is not the unexamined but finally the uncommitted life that is not worth living. Descartes too was mistaken; ‘Cogito ergo sum’ – ‘I think, therefore I am’? Nonsense. ‘Amo ergo sum’—‘I love therefore I am.’ Or, as with unconscious eloquence St. Paul wrote, ‘Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.’ I believe that. I believe it is better not to live than not to love.”

Sunday Morning Bible Study

When the study of James is completed, the group will begin study of another book in the Bible – suggestions made have included Corinthians, other letters of Paul, and Job. Join the discussion, and help make the choice. The group usually meets 9:15-10:15 on Sundays with some exceptions - call or email **Pat Spearman** (781-0041) for current info.

Wednesday Bible Study

Meets at Pilgrim House at 6:30 p.m., 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. Bring a bag supper. Call **Joan or John Little** (781-0829) for information.

Property

By the time you read this, the memorial/meditation garden should be about 85% complete. Plants for it are still welcome, however (See March newsletter for suggestions). Guttering will have been installed on the Wade Avenue side of the sanctuary and rain barrels to conserve water and prevent erosion will have been put in place. Watch for upcoming announcements about the dedication, and enjoy a stroll through the garden in the meantime. For more information, contact **Mac Hulslander**

The **youth** of the church are invited to work on a CUCC grounds cleanup on Saturday, April 3, from 3 to 5 p.m. Info? Call **Mac Hulslander** (833-7203).

Social Justice

As I write this, I anticipate that the March 30 Delegates Assembly of ROAR (Raleigh Organizing for Action and Results) will have been exciting, amazing, and powerful. For a full report on what happened, look for my notes on the Social Justice bulletin board. CUCC is a member of this group.

The Assembly is to have reported on how Wake County and Raleigh spend the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that are used to develop affordable housing. Political leaders were asked for their commitment to focus the money so that those needing housing are helped. Also, Action Teams looking into Transportation and Education will have asked for specific kinds of help from people willing to ride buses for a few hours to check out our transit system or to do site visits at schools to see what needs repair, both in the facilities and programs.

You (any age!) can join the fun, too. Many of these actions are family-friendly and welcome people with varying abilities. Check the bulletin board for specific, limited-time-commitment ways to support positive change in our community. Or call me, **Jane Smith**, 787-6539.

Key Dates, Social Justice

April 4-9 Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace.

Walk from Morganton to Raleigh for Fair Trade not Free Trade, Change Immigration Policies. At the very least, plan to be a part of the **Good Friday Stations of the Cross**, downtown Raleigh, April 9.

April 6- 7 p.m., at Quail Ridge Books there will be a **Town Meeting on “The Greensboro Massacre of 1979: The Search for Truth and Reconciliation.”** Featured will be Dr. Bermanzohn, a survivor and currently Professor of Political Science at Brooklyn College. She will discuss her book, *Through Survivors’ Eyes: From the Sixties to the Greensboro Massacre.*

Also featured will be Dr. Z. Holler of Greensboro’s Beloved Community Center.

April 7 - 12 noon, “Stop the Arms Race Vigil”
Fayetteville Street Mall, downtown Raleigh.

April 18 - 3 p.m., “Holocaust Remembered,”
Jones Auditorium, Meredith College, Raleigh

April 23 - 7 p.m., Peacemaker Award Dinner at University Club, Raleigh. Rev. W.W. Finlator will be the recipient of the award presented by NC Peace Action. **This is a must** for all those interested in peace and justice, and for those wishing to honor a man who has devoted his life to speaking truth to power in an effort to bring peace and justice to our

community and to our world. Reservations required – call **Cy King** (787-5461) for information and cost.

Stewardship

The Nominating Committee’s slate of officers, and lists of those who will be working with our several Ministries and Committees, was announced at the March 28 congregational meeting. (**See included list of those elected.**) There are still and always, however, opportunities to serve in any and all of CUCC’s ministries. Just give a call to the Ministry chairperson and get the information on current projects and share your interest and your talents!

Gourmet Turkey Dinner and Movie (“Dave”)

FUNDRAISER for CUCC’s BUDGET

April 17

Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., followed by the movie

Tickets: \$15

Sign up after Sunday service, or call Mary Pruneau (787-3078), or the Church office (787-6422)

Welcoming, Fellowship, & Growth

Enhancing the CUCC Newsletter

Several months ago, the Communications Committee, part of the Welcoming, Fellowship, and Growth Ministry, asked your opinions about the CUCC newsletter. Some of your suggestions included more news about people, shorter articles, celebrations of special events, regular contributions from all ministries, a more attractive format, and more information about Sunday services. Based on your suggestions, an *ad hoc* newsletter committee was formed to implement changes. The committee consisted of **Vandy Bradow, Carolyn King, Susan**

Lane, Dot Littleton, and Anne Pope. Some of their ideas include:

- Appointing an Editorial Board to edit and produce the newsletter. Carolyn King appointed such a board, consisting of **Vandy Bradow, Carol Clark, and Susan Lane.**
- Requesting that all ministries name a correspondent to report on that ministry's activities each month.
- Identifying "reporters" to help provide news from certain "beats." These include Our People, The Wider Church, a Book Corner, news about former members, and items from our historical archives.

Other enhancements include or will include:

- Adopting a standard format and sequence for articles
- Introducing new features, such as "A Month of Sundays," to spotlight worship activities for Sunday services; "Carol's Corner," a place for Carol Clark to communicate church office information and express her thoughts; "Book Corner," about books that have inspired or moved our members
- Having a contact for each article identified for follow-up or questions
- More information about our people, including milestones such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, awards, job changes, etc. We want to include birthdays for all our members (*day*, not year!), and will be collecting that information over the next several months.

Some of the guidelines for our correspondents include:

- Establishing a deadline so that the congregation will receive the newsletter on the Saturday before the first Sunday of each month
- Limiting articles to one column or less (with exceptions, of course)
- Channeling submissions from outside CUCC through a Ministry
- Unless there's a specific reason for doing otherwise, listing dated material in chronological order and names in alphabetical order

The newsletter is, of course, just one piece of the total communications work of the Welcoming, Fellowship, and Growth Ministry. Other responsibilities of the committee include:

- Webmaster – **Lavon Page**
- Publicity – **Ed Klemmer**
- Bulletin Board – **Shannon Core**
- Pictorial Directory, Telephone Tree, News Distribution – **Carolyn King**

We will be telling you other news about more changes and improvements we hope to make in the future. We invite your suggestions, comments, and help in making our communication with one another as rich and rewarding as possible!

Susan Lane, for the Editorial Board

About Our Bulletin Boards

In order to keep our bulletin boards timely, please date anything you post and attach your name in case anyone should have a question. Please remove the item at the proper time. **Shannon Core** will monitor the long hall board in the church school wing and remove any neglected, outdated material. The church school folks do a good job of keeping their displays current, as do the Social Justice folks. Communication Committee needs to pay more attention to the long hall that we all use. When material of historical significance is removed, please place it in the box marked, "Church Historian," shelved in the robing room.

Carolyn King, Communications Committee

The Women's Group

In planning for the year, many of the women commented that some of their favorite women's group times were from when we shared our childhood memories. To follow up, **Marty Lamb** will be leading in the April Women's Support Group meeting to explore our answers to a few memory questions from Julia Cameron's new book *Walking in This World: The Practical Art of Creativity*. Come share your answers to questions from "When I was a small child, I dreamed of growing up to be _____" to "One action I can take in the direction of my childhood love is _____." Priscilla Chappell will add her poetic spirit to the mix. The meeting is at 7 PM April 15. All women of the church are welcome. Bring a donation (toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, soap, etc.) for Meals on Wheels. More information? Call **Sally Cook** (467-3642).

Retirees Group

CUCC Retirees will meet in the Vaughan Wing at 11 AM on Monday, April 12th. Professor Moni

Sawhney will continue a discussion of modern day India. He will have a fresh perspective on Indian society, having just returned from a month's visit to his native country where he attended two family weddings. Bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverage will be provided. More information? Call **I.T. Littleton**, 787-4786.

Saturday Men's Group

The group usually gathers at 9 a.m. every Saturday morning in the Library for discussion of a chosen topic. On April 3, there will be no meeting (mini-retreat being held that day). On April 10, the group will discuss the "Ethics and Religion" chapter of Edward O. Wilson's book *Consilience*. This topic may continue during the April 17 meeting. Contact **Ed Klemmer** (847-7992).

Community Outreach



Food Bags will be collected on **Sunday, April 4th** – and every **first Sunday** of the month

Our "score" for the month of March was 23 emergency food bags collected. That translates into approximately 92 people fed for one week. Our goal continues to be at least 25 bags per month. Let's achieve that! Info? Call **Marge Eckels** (787-5552)

Our People

CUCC gathered March 21 at a reception hosted by our choir to wish **Mark Denlinger** a reluctant Godspeed on his impending move to Austin, Texas. **I.T. Littleton, Bob Hazel, Etta Barksdale, Mac Hulslander, Joan McAllister, Anne Moorman-Smith** and **Pastor Steve Halsted** gave tributes to the many talents and skills Mark generously shared with his church family. Mark has been a valued member of the choir for more than fifteen years, inspiring us with his beautiful voice. The countless hours he has spent working on building maintenance and repair as a member and Chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee for the past ten years is legendary. One of Mark's loves is the Appalachian Service Project (ASP) and several

summers he took some of our young people to Kentucky and Tennessee to help less fortunate families repair their homes. He went through the Faith to Focus Program and then became a team leader and a member of the CLAY Board, helping others focus their faith in useful ways. **You have been an inspiration to us Mark, and we will miss you!** (Ed. note – thanks to **I.T. Littleton** for capturing the spirit of the many words spoken. Mark's new address is 16303 Big Oak Circle Leander, TX 78641 – phone: (512) 259-0748)

We welcome back with a sigh of relief intrepid travelers **Mary Pruneau** and **Carol Clark**, whose destinations in Spain were unsettlingly in the news.

Autumn Cobeland and her husband **Charles Coble** were pleasantly surprised to find themselves on the same March flight to Europe with **Jo Perry!**

Peg and Mac Hulslander visited son Todd, wife Dionna, and daughter Kayndera Keithley in Houston. Todd has accepted a job with KUHF, a public-group radio station where he will be producing a program on the Houston area art scene.

Congratulations to:

Sue Richey on her challenging new position with the American Kennel Club.

Lisa Marsh in her new job as peer counselor.

Lavon Page, named Special Assistant to the Provost for implementation of the NCSU reaccreditation plan. The plan is entitled "Learning in a Technology-rich Environment," and will guide future uses of technology in teaching.

Ernesto Rivera Saavedra, honored as an author at his school –on the "Writer's Wall of Fame"!

Karen Haley, on completing her comprehensive exam!

We are happy that **Lavon Page's** surgery was successful and he expects to be back (pardon the pun!) to his old self soon.

A funeral service for **Masembo Mfumukanda**, a member of the Universal Church of the Twelve Apostles, was held in CUCC's sanctuary March 20. Our condolences go to his wife and family.

Our Young People's Birthdays*

4/11/89 – Austin Osborne-Newman
4/12/98 – Casey Riemann
4/15/90 – Z.B. Haislip
4/21/94 – Sidney Keyes
5/02/02 – Elsa Viadef
5/18/86 – Reagan Binganisi
5/11/90 – Jospin Milandu
5/18/89 – Carina Saavedra

**If you are missing from this list, we apologize. Please notify the office so we can update our records.*

Prayers

The Monday Lunch Group offers prayers each week for those persons and needs of which they are aware. Please write requests on a slip of paper and place it in the offering plate or one of the prayer jars at the back of the sanctuary or in Pilgrim House. Our prayers are especially solicited this month for **Jo Lemons and Nancy Keppel**.

The Wider Church

“This just in,” from the UCC via our own **Nancy Keppel**—*God Speaks, Women Respond: UCC Ministers Tell Their Stories* is being published by the United Church Press and should be available in early June. This compilation of essays by fourteen clergywomen includes contributions from **Cally Rogers-Witte, Ann McLaughlin**, and Nancy

Keppel. Nancy initiated the project and compiled the essays for the book.

The Southern Conference held a visioning meeting here at CUCC on March 25. The talk was to focus on the future of ENCA and the way UCC churches will continue in ministry together. For more information, ask **Pastor Steve Halsted** and read the SC section of the (free) “United Church News.”

The Wider Community

This list supports organizations and activities of which CUCC is a member or sponsor, and those associated with CUCC members' personal ministries.

Neuse River Clean-Up – April 3. Sign up for canoe space. Call **Sam Gaither** (851-4107)

IAF Statewide Assembly (includes ROAR and Durham CAN), April 25, 6-8 p.m., Union Baptist Church, Durham-- **Jane Smith**

Cedar Cross Retreat, “Creativity and Soul-Tending,” April 30-May 1, --**Mac Hulslander or Nancy Newell**

*Contact name(s) in **bold** for more information; recurring meetings are not included.

Other Meetings and Events

Archiglas, a four-voice singing group from St. Petersburg, Russia, will perform at Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at 7 p.m. April 13. For more information, call HTELC, 828-1687.

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