

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,

Lively discussion continues after the November presidential election. At the heart of the debate lies the "moral values" issue that divides many people. At this point the religious right is claiming they have a monopoly on framing religious values because they delivered the votes that will keep President Bush in office for another four years. Many moderate and progressive Christians are feeling like their religious values are not being heard or even considered in shaping public policy.

Recently I met with seven local clergy who gathered to discuss this issue and we intend to continue our discussions. We are seeking to support one another and our respective churches in better articulating progressive religious values to make that voice more effective. We agreed that "Sojourners," a progressive evangelical Christian magazine is an excellent resource. Its founder and chief editor Jim Wallis has just written a new book titled: *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*. Wallis' voice is emerging as a new prophetic vision that challenges both the right and the left.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to help turn this book into a national bestseller and get progressive religious values into the mainstream of American consciousness! To do so, ask your local bookstore to order copies and get one for yourself. Tell friends

and relatives about it. Start up a study group. Anyone interested here at CUCC to have it as a Lenten Study? For more information about Jim Wallis, go to <http://www.sojo.net>

Blessings and peace

Steve

Church Council

CUCC's first Congregational Meeting of 2005 was held January 22. We heard reports of the Ministries, passed the budget, and a Social Justice resolution, and elected the officers and chairs:

Officers for 2005

Bill Bryan, Moderator

Karen Haley, Past Moderator

Vandy Bradow, Moderator Elect

Sue Richey, Clerk

Mary Pruneau, Treasurer

Carol Kepler, Assistant Treasurer.

Chairs of Ministries for 2005

Bill Lamb, Deacons

Allan Beidler, Property

John Little, Social Justice

June Bolton, Community Outreach

Sue Cottle, Religious Education;

Ed Klemmer, Welcoming, Fellowship, and Growth

Bill Bryan, Stewardship.

There was applause for **Mary Pruneau's** work on the budget, and a big thank you to **Peg Hulslander**, for getting us a new dishwasher/sanitizer!

Deacons

The Deacons Ministry members give our thanks for the leadership and dedication given by **Peg Hulslander** in her term as chair in 2004.

At our January meeting we discussed goals for 2005. They centered on involving members of the congregation in the spiritual life of the church and reaching out into the community to involve new people. Ideas suggested included providing opportunities for members to share their faith journeys either in worship or other settings; working with Campus Ministers at NCSU to interest students in attending church services; and making a greater effort to follow up with visitors and newcomers by hosting newcomer events, such as newcomer breakfasts. We also discussed innovative worship alternatives. One of the ideas is to invite people to bring their dogs to the Taize Service. (This would be on a trial basis. Dates and other specifics to be announced. If you have questions or comments, contact **Peg Hulslander**.) The remainder of our meeting was involved with a discussion of various Lenten activities (highlighted below) and hearing committee reports.

Interested in Joining CUCC?

If you've been attending our church and are interested in joining our membership, please call the office to speak with Steve or email him at pastor@communityucc.org.

We will be receiving new members on February 20th during the 10:30 a.m. worship.

Deacons' Profile Series

June Bolton continues the series of deacon profiles.

NOTE: subjects of interviews are provided a draft to review, with an opportunity to edit the text.

I.T. Littleton

The gentlemanly deacon we know as "I. T." was born on January 28, 1921, as Isaac Thomas Littleton III. Family tradition decreed the use of only the initials. He has another name he doesn't normally use: "Dr. Littleton". While he worked diligently to acquire that one, as he feels the title is most appropriate for medical doctors. But modest as he may be, I. T. has quite a story!

This church leader grew up in Hartsville, TN, where I. T. recalls studying "elocution" and tap dancing while beginning an amateur acting career. He was in three or four plays a year during high school, and he wasn't merely "playing himself". He won "Best Actor" in a statewide high school drama competition, playing against type as the villain. That surely demonstrated his range and talent!

To attend college, I. T. "came over the mountains to Chapel Hill" because of the Carolina Playmakers. But he ended up majoring in Sociology and working in the university library 35 hours a week. After graduation, he served three years in the Navy during World War II. Somehow, when he was stationed in California in 1945, I. T. also found time to enter a ballroom dance contest in which he recalls winning a bottle of champagne. Although he ran into his dance partner from the contest more than 50 years later at a United Nations Association meeting, he

had long since found the love of his life, Dorothy Young, the woman we know as Dot.

In I.T.'s opinion, it may well have been "love at first sight" when they met. I. T. was earning a master's degree in Psychology at the University of Tennessee. The romance progressed quickly, and the Littletons were married on August 12, 1949. Then, remembering the satisfactions of that college job, I. T. decided he wanted to become a librarian.

Shortly after I. T. obtained a master's in library science from the University of Illinois, his former employer, the library of UNC-Chapel Hill, invited him to return to head up the Circulation Department. A clipping from the *Greensboro Daily News*, under his byline and dated December 13, 1953, documents I.T.'s work to organize an exhibition of banned books and to put contemporary instances of censorship into perspective with examples dating back to ancient times.

During their eight years in Chapel Hill, the Littletons also welcomed their three children, Sally, Thomas and Elizabeth. Then Harlan Brown, the director of the NCSU library and a CUCC member, recruited I.T. for the position of assistant director of technical services. In 1959, I. T. accepted that position and the family moved Cary.

I.T. isn't sure whether it was Harlan Brown or a co-worker, our own Cy King, who first introduced him to CUCC, but in 1963 the Littletons joined and really liked "the liberal emphasis" and the "atmosphere of the church." (Now, I. T. says his mentor's widow, Helen Brown, is CUCC's oldest member, while I. T. is probably our oldest active member.)

After a year back in Illinois for I. T.'s doctorate in library science, the Littletons finally settled in Raleigh in 1964, buying property out in the country, near a lake and a pasture with cows. They recall that Highway 70 was then a two-lane road. More than 40 years later, they are in the same location, which now borders Crabtree Valley Mall.

Most of I.T.'s 28 years of service at NCSU was after his selection as the director of the library in 1964. He oversaw two major building projects, a large and growing staff (numbering 140, for instance, in 1981), the beginning of the online catalog, and the acquisition of the library's

millionth volume before retiring in 1987 when he received many honors and congratulations.

That year, the Littletons used retirement gifts to travel to England with the Dickens Disciples. During his highly successful career, I. T. also continued to act from time to time. He once portrayed Hugh in "Look Homeward Angel" with Helen Crisp, another CUCC member, as his wife. His last role, in 1981, was as a senator in a play called "Indians" at Theater in the Park.

In four decades of service to CUCC, I. T. says he's held just about every position at one time or another, including clerk, moderator and head of the Finance Committee. He first served as a deacon while chairing the Caring Committee during the 1980s.

Now in the third year of his current term as a deacon, I. T. is the board's highly valued scribe. In addition, according to Steve, I. T. "is an outstanding lay reader, and he loves doing it." Steve also especially appreciates the way I. T. "brings his keen intellect and library skills to the congregation in ways that help us be informed on issues of justice and peace" and "keeps us connected with the United Nations Association in the Raleigh area."

I.T. enjoys attending the meetings of the retired people's fellowship every month and is highly enthusiastic about the Saturday men's group and the book they are currently discussing, *Free Thinkers*, by Susan Jacoby. His lifelong love of literature and progressive ideals were also reflected when the Littletons visited Monroeville, AL, last year, the setting of his all-time favorite book, Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

With all that I. T. has done for our church with little if any thought of return, there recently came a time that CUCC was able to give something back. I. T. and Dot have long been involved in the lives of their four grandchildren, especially during the illness and loss of their daughter-in-law. He says CUCC support during that time was a tremendous comfort. Let's add to that now by extending our warm congratulations to this extraordinary individual and deacon on the occasion of his 84th birthday!

Social Justice

The Social Justice Ministry joins all church members and friends of **Carolyn King** in wishing her a speedy and complete recovery from her recent surgery. Carolyn and Cy embody the social justice conscience of CUCC, and their service to the entire human community through the Social Action Committee (now Social Justice Ministry - SJM) is irreplaceable. So, get well and get back to us soon, dear friend.

CUCC and the Social Justice Ministry recently lost an effective and loyal member and ardent activist in the person of **Nancy Keppel**. As a gesture of affection and symbol of respect for Nancy's commitment to social justice, the SJM will contribute \$200 per year for five years to one of Nancy's favorite causes, the Resource Center for Women in the South, Inc.

Pastor Steve Halsted reported at the SJM's January meeting that the North Carolina Council of Churches is sponsoring a statewide event on the issue of human-caused climate change. The event will be held on Earth Day, April 22, 2005. A prior organizational meeting is going to be held at Saint Francis of Assisi Church where 100 people--clergy, lay people, scientists, and environmental activists--will establish the focus and direction of the Earth Day meeting.

The Social Justice Ministry is currently evaluating those public policy issues and organizations that it plans to work with, endorse, and help subsidize during 2005.

In concert with appropriate personnel and ministries in the church, the Social Justice Ministry is preparing a proposal to plant 200 tulip bulbs on the church property in honor of the 2005 Million Mom March on Washington.

-John Little

Just How Are Wake County's Schools?

See for yourself. Raleigh Organizing for Action & Change (ROAR) is going to be surveying the Wake County Public Schools from February 1 through April 8. We are looking for people to walk the schools and grounds and complete a survey form. It

will take from one to one and a half hours for each school. There will be a need for two to three people per location, so you can partner with friends! For more details, contact me at 787-6539. I'd love to have at least 10 folks from CUCC join the effort.

-Jane Smith

Religious Education

The next Children's Church School rotation (Jan. 23 to Feb. 6) will be on the Last Supper. This is the rotation during which the children learn about communion. On Feb. 6 the children will return to worship to sit with their parent during communion. At CUCC, parents decide whether their children should receive a blessing or take part in communion. Steve's information session is an opportunity to ask him questions and also to talk to other parents.

Any parent unable to attend the January 23 session about communion is welcome to call the church office (787-6422) to set up a private appointment with Steve.

SPCA and Dinner with Steve and Marcy

On February 26, the 6th and 7th grade youth will meet at CUCC at 3:30 for a field trip to the SPCA followed by dinner at Steve and Marcy's home. Parents can pick up at the Halsted's at 8:00. Please RSVP Steve or Marcy so they know how much dinner to cook.

HELP! On Palm Sunday our Sunday School classes will be studying prayer. We are looking for **someone who knows sign language** and would be able to come to our joint class and sign the Lord's Prayer for the children. If you are interested, please see **Anne Bailey**.

Soda bottles needed. Our Sunday School classes will be participating in an activity that requires large plastic soda bottles with lids (3 liter size). If you can donate any of these to us, it would be greatly appreciated. Please leave them on the table in our large Sunday School room. Thank you!

Adult Forum

The Forum meets on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall. Check each Sunday's bulletin for upcoming topics.

Monday Lunch Group During February, the group will be reading *There is a River: The Story of Edgar Cayce*, and will have various activities related to the book. All are welcome to bring lunch and join us in the Hoffmann Room Mondays at 12:15 p.m. For more information, call **Geraldine Bryan**.

Wednesday Bible Study

This group meets at Pilgrim House at 6:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays to discuss the next week's Lectionary selections. For more information, contact **Mike Schafale**, 567-1098. Bring a bag supper.

Sunday Bible Study

This group meets Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Bradow Room. In February the group will continue its study of I & II Corinthians. Call **Pat Spearman** for more information, 781-0041.

Welcoming, Fellowship, and Growth

Retirees Fellowship

CUCC Retired Folks will meet on Monday February 14 at 11AM in the Vaughn Fellowship Hall for the annual Valentine's Day party, with potluck lunch and games. All are welcome, retired or not. If you plan to come, please bring a hot dish or salad (dessert and drinks will be provided), and call Kerma Hazel at 772-1393 to let her know you are coming and what you will bring. Come and share in the food, fun and fellowship!

Women's Support Group

The Women's Support Group will not meet in February. The Group needs women to organize one event for a third Thursday night meeting in the Bradow Room at 7 p.m. It can be a potluck, a book discussion, a creative writing time, a speaker, etc. Event announcements can be given to the office at least three weeks before the event. The office will

email the congregation as well as announce it in the Sunday church bulletin.

Housekeeping for Events

Please wash any non-paper cups, plates, utensils, spoons, etc., and place them in the kitchen drying rack before leaving the church. Please wipe all table and counter surfaces clean of crumbs and liquids. Please remove any decorations used for an event as no one else knows what to do with them!

Our People

Jo Lemons' new companion has one waggly tail, two big brown eyes, and three legs (hence the name **Trinity**). Jo notes it's a good thing her Trinity doesn't have four legs, or she could jump the fence!

We are happy to hear at press time that **Carolyn King** has completed post-operative care and post-surgery rehab at UNC and is now at home. **Cy and Carolyn** – consider yourself hugged by us all!

The Epiphany Party drew >75 folk to share food, song, the Puerto Rican and Louisiana traditions, and the joy of four new babies! Lindsey Kepler, a 2004 honoree, made her first appearance as well. **Carol Kepler, the Littletons, Geraldine Bryan, Vandy Bradow** all beamed at their grandchildren!

Mary Pickering, the great niece of the late Susie Allen and Fannie Bell Jones, two sisters who were long-time CUCC members, attended worship services on January 16th. Susie Allen served as the church clerk for many years and was a prominent member of the choir. To recognize the many contributions that Ms. Allen to the church, the congregation voted to name the choir the **Susie Allen Choir**. Mary Pickering who lives at 2103 Breeze Road in Raleigh is a singer herself and we hope that she may visit again.

Robert Parrish shares his prose and poetry:

Reconciliation at Christmas

It was not until my late thirties that I met my real father. I got acquainted with him at a family reunion in Arden, N. C., which is near Asheville. No, this was not an "Oprah" experience; there were no fireworks going off in the sky or beautiful orchestra music playing in the

background. Bobby, the name that most people called my father, did not fully acknowledge that I was his son. But, there was no doubt about it; I was his son. There were too many relatives that disclosed to me that Bobby was my dad. What's more, my late mother finally came around to admitting to me that this was so.

Despite the lack of happy emotions, I did feel a sense of wholeness. Here was a man that had similar characteristics to mine. We seemed to look, talk, and walk alike.

Just a few years ago, Bobby developed brain cancer and was dying. It so happens that I met my half sister at the same family reunion where I met my father. As she kept in contact with me, she kept me informed about his medical condition. Right before Christmas of 2001 I had the opportunity to visit my sister and Bobby in Arden. It was there that I had prayer with him. During the prayer an atmosphere of peace and forgiveness permeated his home. Yes, emotional and spiritual healing did take place. A few weeks later sister Linda called to tell me that Bobby had died.

Even though Bobby is with God, my sister and I have continued to build upon our relationship. During this past holiday season I journeyed to Asheville to visit her. It was great to see her and to interact with my niece and nephew. I also got the opportunity to meet her significant other. What's more, I got to meet one of my brothers for the first time.

Sure, there were times that I wondered if I knew what I was doing. However, the feeling that sticks with me is that "it was just like family."

Christmas is about forgiveness and the building of relationships. At least, this is how I grew this past holiday season.

--Robert Parrish

The Day after Christmas

The day after Christmas, how will you live?
The day after Christmas, what joy will you give?

Will you live a life of peace on earth
Giving hope to all for more Jesus' birth?

After all that Christmas glow
Will its light your spirit show?

The day after Christmas, after lovely times
The day after Christmas, will you still be kind?

After having all of your plenty
Will you share with those without any?

After all that Christmas glow
Will its love your spirit show?

The day after Christmas.
The day after Christmas.



Our Young People's Birthdays

2/5/92 – Abby Smith

2/6/93 – Elena Briere

2/15/00 – Gloria Difuidi

3/3/88 – Amanda Bowen

3/24/90 – Nick DiVito

Please write **prayer requests** on a slip of paper and place it in the offering plate or in one of the prayer jars (Narthex or in Pilgrim House.) Our prayers are especially solicited this month for our caretaker, **Willie Foggie, Cindy Martin, and Carolyn King**, all recuperating from surgery. Please continue to remember **Jo Banks, Jo Lemons, Audrey Leiser, Ted Mew, and Eunice Durgin.**

Community Outreach



Food Bags will be collected on **Sunday, February 6**, and every **first Sunday** of the month.

Let's make a New Year's resolution for 2005 – to contribute an emergency food bag each month on the first Sunday. Our goal is 25 bags a month; in January we collected only 13. Let's make up for the shortfall in February!

Roster

Peg Hulslander has her own email address now – Peg@Community.org.

Change:

Doug Barrick, barricks@bellsouth.net

Michael Hebert, 2310 Clark Ave., Raleigh, NC 27607.

Cy and Carolyn King, 501 E. Whitaker Mill Rd. #207A, Raleigh, NC 27608, 829-0780.

Rosa and Carina Saavedra and Ernesto Rivera-Saavedra, 1314 Ivy Lane, Raleigh, NC 27609

Correction:

There was an error in January's newsletter listing the babies of 2004. **Ashleigh Difuidi** is the correct name for our first baby of 2004.

**GENERAL SYNOD XXV
July 1-5, 2005 in Atlanta, GA.**

**“Come Listen, Go Serve,
God is Still Speaking”**

**Convenes at 2:30 p.m. on Friday and adjourns at
9:30 p.m. on Tuesday**

For more information, see www.ucc.org, click on General Synod XXV.



VALENTINE FUNDRAISER

FEBRUARY 12

Vaughan Fellowship Hall

5:30 – Wine

6:00 - Chicken Enchilada Dinner

7:00 - Movie

LENTEN ACTIVITIES –every week after Ash Wednesday from February 13 to Easter (March 27)

Sundays Drumming

3:30-4:30 in the Bradow room

Drumming: listening, speaking in community.

For more information, email Kurk Brewington, theteckie@hotmail.com

Thursdays Jo Lemons' Study Group

5:30 book and place TBA

For many years a small group of CUCC members have gathered to study and to pray as a group at the Lenten season. Usually the group has used a Maxie Dunham workbook as their source of inspiration for 6 weekly meetings, and usually the vibrant spirit of now 70 year old (hard to believe!) **Jo Lemons** has been an integral part of the group. It is unclear at the writing of this how much involvement Jo may be able to have with us this year, but there is at least enough desire and interest that we're listing this Lenten study group again this year as a spiritual growth experience. **Adrienne Talbot** is exploring what book we might use as the basis for our inspiration. The first meeting will be held at 5:30 P.M. on Thursday, February 17, and continuing for six consecutive Thursdays at either the church or a home within a few mile radius of the church, to be announced later. Do consider joining in the mystery of exploring spiritual growth during this six-week period in this group! If interested in venturing into possibilities in sharing through study and prayer, call Adrienne Talbot at 787-8082 or **Marty Lamb** at 834-4280 to join the group and be included in the book order.

Fridays - Discussion, *Being Peace*

7-8 p.m. in the Bradow room

To what extent are we as Western Christians too materialistic? Is reincarnation truly real? What can we learn about meditation? In his book, *Being Peace*, Tich Naht Hanh, a Buddhist monk, challenges us to think about these and other questions. In this publication, which is inexpensive and available in bookstores, he helps to see how we are all interconnected with each other and the universe. Mr. Hanh also makes the demand that we as Western Christian do a much better job in taking care of the environment. **Robert Parrish** will be leading this discussion group.

Saturdays Bedtime Stories

6:30-7:15 p.m. in Vaughan Fellowship Hall

BEDTIME STORIES

for all ages

Cuddle up with friends and family as you listen to Geraldine Bryan, master storyteller, tell the stories of Jesus' life. We'll sip hot cocoa, sing a hymn or two and have a few minutes for chatting.



Children can go home to bed or take home a church friend for a sleepover. Adults still have time for a night out. You might want to make plans to go out together after the story. Geraldine's stories enthrall listeners of all ages - all-CUCCers are invited. You are welcome to bring friends. Each week's story stands alone.

*What could be better on a cold winter night than
to cuddle up with a good story?*

Saturdays, 6:30 - 7:15 p.m.
in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall
February 19, 26, March 5, 12
sign a cocoa mug on the youth
bulletin board to help
our preparations

What to bring: Nothing is required, but it might be fun to dress in PJ's and bring a favorite pillow, blanket or sleep friend.

Community United Church of Christ
814 Dixie Trail
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February 2005 Newsletter

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The deadline for our March 2005 Newsletter is
February 14th.

The Newsletter can be found on our web page:
www.communityucc.org

A Month of Sundays

February 6, Last

Sunday in Epiphany.
**9:00 – 9:30 Taizé; 9:15
Adult Forum & Bible
Study; 10:30 Worship
Service with
Communion &
Church School;
Fellowship Time**
Lectionary:
Exod 24:12-18;
Ps 2 or Ps99;
2 Pet 1:16-21;
Matt 17:1-9

February 13, First
Sunday in Lent **9:00 –
9:30 Taizé; 9:15 Adult
Forum & Bible Study;
10:30 Worship Service
& Church School;
Fellowship Time**
Lectionary:
Gen 2:15-17; 3:1-7;
Ps 32; Rom 5:12-19;
Matt 4:1-11

February 20, Second
Sunday in Lent.
**9:00 – 9:30 Taizé with
Communion; 9:15
Adult Forum &
Bible Study; 10:30
Worship Service &
Church School;
Fellowship Time**
Lectionary:
Gen 12:1-4a; Ps 121;
Rom 4:1-5, 13-17;
John 3:1-17 or
Matt 17:1-9

February 27, Third
Sunday in Lent.
**9:00-9:30 Taizé; 9:15
Adult Forum & Bible
Study**
**10:30 Worship Service
& Church School;
Fellowship Time**
Lectionary:
Exod 17:1-7; Ps 95;
Rom 5:1-11;
John 4:5-42