

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nurturing Spiritual Growth and Working for Social Justice

814 Dixie Trail
Raleigh, NC 27607
919-787-6422 cucc@ipass.net
www.communityucc.org

Stephen S. Halsted, Pastor

January 2002

Lectionary for January

Jan. 13 First Sunday after Epiphany:

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalms 29; Acts 10:34-43;
Matthew 3:13-17

Jan. 20 Second Sunday after Epiphany:

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalms 40:1-11; I Corinthians
1:1-9; John 1:29-42

Jan. 27 Third Sunday after Epiphany:

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalms 27:1, 4-9; I Corinthians
1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

From CUCC's New Pastor...

Dear Friends,

As conveyed earlier, I am both excited and thankful to receive your calling to become elected pastor of Community United Church of Christ.

I appreciate all the diligent and devoted work of the Church Council and Search Committee in preparing the letter of call.

I affirm our mutual hope in looking forward to a significant and fruitful ministry together and promise you my whole-hearted cooperation, love, and prayers in carrying out my pastoral duties.

May the "Peace of Christ" which passes all human understanding be with us all. Always.

Steve

Vibes from Valerie...

While worshipping recently, I was overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude for the multitude of blessings afforded me, one of which is being assigned to CUCC. I have many reasons for this testimony of thanksgiving, the basis for all of them is found in I Chronicles 4:10, when Jabez calls on the God of Israel: "*Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!*" My journey here at CUCC is enlarging my border.

I have experienced a deeper call to Peace and Justice, (my two new favorite words), by people who, though not perfect, strive daily for the perfection of community much like what is recorded in scripture, "*by this love all will know that you are my disciples.*" I must admit, I was not accustomed to seeing a Sunday bulletin so full of opportunities throughout each week for witness,

caring, mission, fellowship, and evangelism. The lesson: that outreach is not a by-product, but a goal of ministry.

Coming from a very Pentecostal/Ecclesiastical background where emotion in worship runs very high, I have experienced an emotional charge here at CUCC that I did not think possible. It comes in the quiet moments of Taize and the reflective period of prayer concerns following the sermon. This has taught me the need for balance in all components of ministry.

I have been challenged theologically to take a closer look at my definition of "worship" and its design. The manner in which worship is sometimes carried out can skew God's real intent and purpose for worship by focusing on creatures and not creator. This valuable lesson has been reshaped in my spirit here, as I observe the community of believers who work hard at making God the central focus. No major focus is placed on anything that is not Christ-centered, not even the offering. And if, by chance, a slant in focus occurs, there is a quick realignment with scripture, placing us back on course.

I anticipate Christ's coming and the new experiences that await me as I continue to give and receive here at this church of Justice and Peace.

Valerie

Carol's Concluding Thoughts...

Dear Friends,

You have been most gracious and loving in this time of farewell! Thank you for the innumerable ways you have helped to make the ending of our time together both delightful and poignant. There are more thank-yous than I can write here. So please accept my broad-sweeping gratitude for the Christmas "Carol" party and CD of the stories and songs; for the special parties with youth and children; for the silver key chain with key to the church; for the weekend in Charleston that Matthew and I are eagerly anticipating; for the many notes and hugs and good wishes; and, most of all, for allowing me to heal and grow and learn with you these past two years. May God continue to bless you as you share Christ's presence in the world. There's no doubt in my mind or heart that you are a gifted, unique, and courageous people of faith. What a privilege to know and love you! Grace and peace,

Carol

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Our Church Has a History

Our predecessor church, the First Christian Church of Raleigh, was founded in 1881. In 1924, it became the United Church of Raleigh at Hillsborough and Dawson Streets.

The United Church joined the First Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1969, and became the Community United Church of Christ at the present location on the corner of Wade Ave. and Dixie Trl.

Habitat House, 1989

On May 15, 1989, Jim Smith, moderator, and Cally Rogers-Witte, pastor, along with the pastors from Laodicea Church of Christ (now Macedonia), Martin Street Baptist Church, and Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, signed a "letter of intent" to provide \$33,000.00 in cash or in kind contributions to build a Habitat for Humanity House.

From Church Council Minutes, Oct.18, 1981:

About the Budget

A new item being proposed by the Finance Committee is 209 – an amount of \$250.00 to be paid to the city of Raleigh "in lieu of taxes" (for services the church received but did not pay for such as fire and police protection, garbage collection, etc.) There was considerable discussion of the philosophical basis for such a payment. Most Council members expressed that it was appropriate to include the item in the budget to generate discussion by the congregation on the ethical and philosophical questions relating to the payment of taxes by charitable and non-profit organizations.

Did You Hear?

- ✦ "Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it.
Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life; love illumines it."
-Martin Luther King, Jr.
- ✦ "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor."
-Robert Louis Stevenson
- ✦ "Good judgment comes from experience, and experience – well, that comes from poor judgment."
-Cousin Woodman
- ✦ "Life isn't a matter of milestones, but of moments."
-Rose Kennedy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Youth Education

Senior High Bible Study

This wonderful opportunity for study, fellowship, and fun is still available to any senior high youth and their friends. The bible study is from 4:00-5:00p.m. every Monday in the Bradow room. During the month of January, the study will continue to focus on the book of Luke.

Adult Education

Adult Forum

Jan. 6th: Jim Warren, Staff member of NC WARN (Waste Awareness and Reduction Network) will talk about the dangers of toxic and radioactive pollution.

Jan. 13th: We will begin a series on immigration and how it impacts North Carolina. Sister Attracta, a Dominican Nun who works on immigration issues with the NC Justice and Community Development Center, will speak.

Jan. 20th: We will view a video with an emphasis on immigration and the environment.

Jan. 27th: Ron Woodard, Director of NC Listen, an immigration reform organization, will speak about changes in immigration law and practices that his organization thinks necessary. Mr. Woodard is a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, a member of the Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church in Cary, and Account Manager for a Fortune 500 company.

What does it mean to be a Just Peace Church when our nation is at war?

For the five Sundays in December, the Adult Forum, thankfully augmented by many who do not normally attend the Forum, wrestled with the question, "What does it mean to be a Just Peace Church when our nation is at war?" Even though no definitive answer emerged from our discussions, all have benefited from the "brainstorming," the give and take, and the sharing of ideas. At this point, no decision about "where we go from here" has been made, but it seems likely that there will be continuing dialogue on this question. We are struggling to find what our faith requires of us and that isn't easy. We hope that more will join in this quest for answers. Through the newsletter, bulletins, and Mission Moments, we will try to keep everyone informed about the process, opportunities, and discoveries.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Wider Outreach

Eco-Justice Advisor Needed

The 2002 Wider Outreach Committee is looking for someone to be our eco-justice activities advisor. Call Peg Hulslander, 833-7203, if you would be willing to serve, or Jane Smith, 787-6539, if you would like to know what the position would entail.

Eckels Bequest Proposal

The money Art Eckels gave to the Wider Outreach Committee has prompted much prayer, research, and discussion. We are open to suggestions for using the money for a new ministry or for reinvigorating a current ministry.

If no idea arises by Jan. 2003, the money will fund a seed project of an existing agency that meets criteria used to invite agencies to Marketplace.

We have not discerned God calling us to a particular ministry. However, we are aware that Steve Halsted's arrival may be the missing piece for which the Spirit has kept us waiting. Hence, we wanted to give the congregation reasonable time to decide how to "spend the money," as we've been encouraged to do so.

Habitat for Humanity House

Based on the informational meeting in December, the Wider Outreach Committee plans to bring a proposal to the congregation stating that we should be a sponsor and builder of a Habitat House.

We will probably want to partner with other congregations or groups. In order to make a solid proposal to the congregation, Wider Outreach needs a sense of how many people are willing to commit time and money to the project. If interested, contact Jim Smith, jwsmith@bellsouth.net, or 832-2213, before Jan. 14th. Be prepared with how much time you would be able to commit, what skills you can offer, and/or how much money you can contribute.

Like to Cook?

Loaves and Fishes needs cooks to prepare a simple meal for 20. Menus and reimbursement monies are available. Call Suzette Roach, 460-8678, to volunteer for a Monday.

Emergency Food Bags

In December we surpassed all expectations and collected **33** basic food bags! Let's continue that level of giving. It's a big plus in our ministry.

Thank you

Many thanks to the choir for serving the Ark Shelter meal in December. Call Jane Smith, 787-6539, if you would like to cook, serve, or coordinate the meals in 2002.

Blankets for Afghanistan

With just one week's notice, our small congregation donated **50** blankets for Afghanistan! That number has been multiplied across the city in other churches.

Social Action Calendar

Friday, Jan. 18th

- NC Symphony, Tribute to Martin Luther King, 8:00p.m., Myrandi Concert Hall, \$35.00, contact Box Office.

Saturday, Jan. 19th

- Wreath Laying, Martin Luther King Memorial Gardens, 9:00a.m.
- Annual Martin Luther King Youth Personal Responsibility Summit, 9:00a.m., Exploris Museum and IMAX Theater, 201 E. Hargett St.
- Meaningful Race Relations Summit, 9:00a.m., First Baptist Church, 130 E. Morgan St.
- North Carolinians for Alternatives to War sponsored march starting at the Martin Luther King Memorial Garden at 11:00a.m. followed by a rally for non-violent solutions to problems on the Capitol Square at 12:00p.m.

Monday, Jan. 21st

- 21st Annual Martin Luther King Triangle Interfaith Prayer Breakfast, 8:00a.m., Sheraton Imperial Hotel, RTP, 1-40 to Page Rd., Triangle Park, Raleigh.
- NC Martin Luther King Annual Liberty Bell Ringing Ceremony, 10:00a.m., Bicentennial Plaza.
- Martin Luther King Annual Memorial March, 11:00a.m., departing from the State Capitol Building on Edenton St.
- 2002 Martin Luther King Noon Interfaith Observance, 12:00p.m., Raleigh Memorial Auditorium.
- 2002 Martin Luther King Evening Musical Celebration, 6:00p.m., Raleigh Memorial Auditorium.

Saturday, Jan. 26th

- 7th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Cultural Festival, 12:30p.m. McKimmon Center, NCSU.

FELLOWSHIP

Friday Folks

There has been some interest expressed to restart the Friday Folks gatherings. If you have any suggestions or would like to volunteer to plan a Friday Folks activity, contact Paul Kiel, 845-7689.

Women's Support Group

We'll meet on Jan. 24th at 7:00p.m. in the Hoffmann room to plan our activities for the coming year. Please contact Sally Cook for more information, 467-3642.

Vein of Gold

Just a reminder that starting Jan. 8th, a group of CUCC women and friends will begin a journey through Julie Cameron's book Vein of Gold. The group meets at 6:45p.m. in the Bradow room each Tuesday.

CUCC Retirees Group

The Retirees will meet Monday, Jan. 14th at 11:00a.m. to hear Dr. Howard Miller, CUCC member and Professor Emeritus of Psychology at NCSU. Dr. Miller will speak to us on MEMORY. Please bring your own sandwich – dessert and drinks will be provided. DON'T FORGET!

OUR PEOPLE

Susan Lane is doing well after a December surgery.

I.T. Littleton is recovering from a broken arm and from gallbladder surgery.

Jack Kepler, a senior member of the Sacraments and Chancel Committee and a major spirit of each CUCC Christmas, deserves our recognition and thanks. For years his trumpeting talent has been a part of the brass ensemble at our Christmas Eve services. In addition to his musical talents, Jack has also donated his time and energy to putting up the Christmas trees, hanging the door wreaths, and miscellaneous sawing and hammering. Most recently, he took the time to repair the hooks and dowels for hanging the banners. Thanks, Jack!

Scottie Bell recently donated many beautiful vases, which will be happily employed at many celebrations and gatherings for years to come. Thank you, Scottie!

Anne Elleman graciously donated some books for our library in December. The books will be placed in the church library and include Birds of the South and Hardscrabble: As We Were by Charlotte Hilton Green, The Flim-Flam Man and the Apprentice Grifter by Guy Owen, along with several copies of a 1978 version of CUCC's Favorite Recipes. Thank you, Anne!

Thank you to Carol Ripley-Moffitt for spackling and to Joan McAllister for painting Steve's office over the holidays. Thanks Carol and Joan!

Twins Alex and Eliza Wood were born Nov. 9th to Suzanne and Scott Wood. Four-year-old big sister Emily also welcomed the twins home. All are doing well. Congratulations!

Julie Butcher and Dorcas Miller have welcomed Christian Joshua Robb Butcher into their home. Christian was born April 17, 2001 in Guatemala. Congratulations!

Congratulations to Kat Griggs, daughter of Elizabeth Greene, and her Irish dance group for their first place finish at a competition in Florida in early December. They have qualified to go to Scotland in March for the world competition.

In December, CUCC's Administrative Assistant, Toni Maes, received an invitation to join the Peace Corps. She'll be leaving mid-February for the Kingdom of Nepal where she is assigned to the Primary Education Teacher Training Program and will also participate in environmental education programs.

Martin Eiselt, Annette Berg, and Teresa Eiselt-Berg are visiting family in Germany over the holidays. They will be returning for a two-month extension here in Raleigh, which will conclude on Feb. 28th.

Manorhouse Assisted Living Retirement Center made a contribution to the Alzheimer's Association on behalf of CUCC in December.

**February Newsletter Deadline:
Monday, January 21st.**

If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, please contact the office.

Did You Know?

- ✿ The Koala is the sleepest animal in the world, averaging 22 hours of sleep each day.
- ✿ Saturn is the only planet that can float on water.
- ✿ A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
- ✿ The interior of the Sun is 29 million degrees Fahrenheit but if it burned out, we wouldn't know for eight minutes.
- ✿ Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur.

Can You Unscramble the Following Hymns?

- ✿ AISA UM S JT
- ✿ UOLEI, JASLS LNDS TE
- ✿ DLBO MA TEYG, KET, LIF EI TE
- ✿ OL FHB ITUR SLNWT EH B AREEIE

How Did You Do?

Last month's scrambled hymns were as follows:

- Silent Night
- Away in a Manger
- O Come, O Come Emmanuel
- It Came Upon a Midnight Clear