

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nurturing Spiritual Growth and Working for Social Justice

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Stephen S. Halsted, Pastor

January 2003

Lectionary for January

January 5th, Second Sunday after Christmas

Jer 31:7-14 or Sir 24:1-12; Ps 147:12-20 or
Wis 10:15-21; Eph 1:3-14; Jn 1(1-9), 10-18.

January 12th, First Sunday after Epiphany

Gen 1:1-5; Ps 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mk 1:4-11.

January 19th, Second Sunday after Epiphany

1 Sam 3:1-10, (11-20); Ps 139:1-6, 13-18;
1 Cor 6:12-20; Jn 1:43-51.

January 26th, Third Sunday after Epiphany

Jon 3:1-5, 10; Ps 62:5-12; 1 Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20.

Dear Friends,

We are on the brink of beginning a new year and many people take time to look ahead and set a few New Year's Resolutions. Often they are done with good intentions but soon forgotten after a few months. I remember a few years back when I decided to alter my reading habits and add a few novels to my usual diet of theological and socio-political books. I resolved to read a new novel each month. At the end of the year upon reflection I realized that I had fallen well short, although I did enjoy the 4 Tony Hillerman mysteries!

This year I am resolved to do better and I invite you to share with me in one particular new year's resolution. That resolution is to implement the "Ministry Teams" in place of Board and Committees. We have discussed this approach at two recent Congregational Meetings. We have presented a structure of seven Ministry Teams which will carry out all the functions that the previous Boards and Committees did but with slight shifts in emphasis and grouping. The seven Ministry Teams are as follows: Deacons, Property, Social Justice, Community Outreach, Religious Education, Growth and Discipleship, and Stewardship.

In order to answer any questions and concerns about this proposed restructuring, we will offer

small group discussions to receive input from the congregation at a **Congregational Meeting after church on January 12**. We will also be voting on the 2003 church budget. Then in February, we are planning to hold mission fairs after worship when people can learn more about and consider with which Ministry Team they would like to participate. Why not make it one of your new year's resolutions to re-dedicate yourself to the "Good News" of Jesus Christ by joining with others in the important work of the church.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus reminds us: "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, mixed together, running over, will be put in your heart; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:38)

Wishing you all a Happy, Healthy and Holy New Year!

Blessings & Peace,

Steve



PRAYERS

The Monday Lunch Group offers prayers each week for those persons and needs of which they are aware. Please write your 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.

The Caring Committee wants to know of the special needs of any of our members and friends so that we can respond to those needs. Please keep us informed by calling Marge Eckels, 787-5552, with any news.



MEETINGS and EVENTS

Women's Support Group – No January meeting. On February 20th, there will be a potluck and meeting in the Hoffmann Room at 6:30.

Monday Lunch Group meets at 12:15 each Monday in the Hoffmann Room. Bring a sandwich and enjoy.

Retirees - The retirees get the year launched on Monday, January 13th at 11 am. John Little will tell us about early conservationists such as John Muir. Bring a sandwich and come prepared for good fellowship. If you've been thinking about coming, why not start the year by attending in January. Beverage and dessert are served.

BOARD OF DEACONS

The January meeting will be on Thursday, January 9th at 7:00 pm in the Pilgrim House.

Art Wall

Thank you to Ted Gregory for the art work for the last couple of months. We look forward to seeing Margaret Hilpert's works in the middle of January.

CHURCH COUNCIL

SEMI-ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

We will hold CUCC's next Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 12th, immediately following the 10:30 service. This meeting replaces the one originally scheduled for December 8th. We will discuss and vote on the 2003 budget. We will present the annual reports and we will discuss the proposed changes in the Constitution and By Laws. As you know, Semi-Annual Meetings are "open" forums where you are welcome to raise any topic or question you'd like.

Child care and refreshments will be provided.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Wider Outreach Committee

WAIT TABLES? LOVE TO COOK? **FEBRUARY 16**

The Wider Outreach Committee is booking people to cook and/or serve meals at the Wright Center for Women. CUCC provides a warm meal for about 40 for homeless women every third Sunday of the month. For cooks, your commitment is to prepare one dish for 40 people (a main dish, vegetable or dessert); money is available to reimburse your food expenses if needed. For servers, your task is to serve the meal; the time commitment is generally from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. No clean up is involved. This is a great activity for multigenerational groups, for getting to know new people at CUCC, or for involving family members who don't attend CUCC. To schedule your time to help, call Jo Perry; she's signing up people for **February 16** and other months.

SOCIAL ACTION

Social Action Calendar

January 1 - Stop the Arms Race, noon Fayetteville Street Mall in front of Century Post Office

January 18 - Anti-War March in Washington. For further information and to reserve space on a bus, contact Jim Stockwell, 829-1183. Hundreds of thousands of people will converge on Washington to call for peace and not war.

January 18 – MLK events

Martin Luther King Wreath Laying Ceremony. 9:00 am - Martin Luther King Memorial Park.

Annual Martin Luther King Youth Personal Responsibility Summit. Registration 8:45 am - Exploris Museum. 1:00 pm Summit ends.

MLK Building Meaningful Race Relations: Town Hall. Registration 9:00 am, Adjourn 3:00 pm - Martin Luther King Resource Center, Hargett Street.

January 20 – MLK events

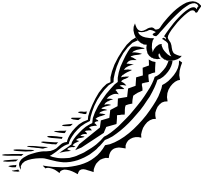
22nd Annual Martin Luther King Triangle Interfaith Breakfast. 8:00 am - Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Research Triangle Park.

Martin Luther King Annual Bell Ringing Ceremony. 10:00 am - Bicentennial Plaza.

2003 Martin Luther King Holiday Memorial March. 11:00 am - departs from State Capitol Building.


2003 Martin Luther King Ecumenical Observance. 12:00 Noon - Raleigh Memorial Auditorium.

For complete details on all MLK events see the Social Action Committee Bulletin Board.



Let Loaves and Fishes prepare some of the world's best **chili** for your winter enjoyment and Super Bowl parties. Place your order by phoning Shannon Core at 846-0902 (or use the sign up sheet on the Coming Events bulletin board in the hallway) by Sunday, January 12. Meat or vegetarian is \$8.00 per quart and packaged in freezable containers. Pick up your order from Hudson Presbyterian Church, 4921 Six Forks Road (use north entrance) on Friday, January 24, 3:00 - 7:00 pm or Saturday January 25, 9:00 - 12:00 noon.

Reminder: **Food Bags** will be collected on January 5th (next Sunday).



Let's start the New Year with generous contributions to the emergency food bag collection on the first Sunday of the month. In December we gathered 22 food bags. Our goal is still 25. Remember – we've done it once and can do it again! The power outage helped us to value the privilege of having light and heat. If we were hungry, we'd know how important even a basic food bag is to those who lack food. Use your imagination – and then act!

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Radical Legacy Peace

Martin Luther King Jr. would have been 73 on January 15th. On April 4, 1967 he preached a sermon at Riverside Church in New York entitled "Beyond Vietnam." Some of the words he spoke then have relevance today as our nation is at war in Afghanistan and seems on the brink of war with Iraq. Certainly the parallels are not exact but---

"A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present practices. On the one hand we are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa, and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say 'This is not just.' It will look at our alliance with the landed gentry of South America and say: 'This is not just.' The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach and nothing to learn from them is not just. A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: 'This way of settling differences is not just.'

America, the richest and most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the way in this revolution of values. There is nothing except a tragic death wish to prevent us from reordering our priorities, so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war.

This call for a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing

and unconditional love for all mankind. This oft misunderstood, this oft misinterpreted concept, so readily dismissed by the Nietzsches of the world as a weak and cowardly force, has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love I am not speaking so some sentimental and weak response.... I am speaking of that force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying us and his love is perfected in us. Let us hope that this spirit will become the order of the day.

We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation. We must move past indecision to action. We must find new ways to speak for peace ... and justice throughout the developing world, a world that borders on our doors. If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.

Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves principle of life. Love is somehow the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Moslem-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about ultimate reality is beautifully summed up in the first epistle of Saint John: 'Let us love one another, for love is God. And every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. If we love one another, God dwelleth in to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the sons of God, and our brothers wait eagerly for our response. Shall we say the odds are too great? Shall we tell them the struggle is too hard? Will our message be that the forces of American life militate against their arrival as full men, and we send our deepest regrets? Or will there be another message --- of longing, of hope, of solidarity with their yearnings, of commitment to their cause, whatever the cost? The choice is ours, and though we might prefer it otherwise, we must choose in this crucial moment of human history.

And if we will only make the right choice, we will be able to transform this pending cosmic elegy into a creative psalm of peace. If we will make the right choice, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our world into a beautiful symphony of

brotherhood. If we will but make the right choice, we will be able to speed up the day, all over America and all over the world, when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CUCC Church School Program:

Preschool - Elementary children

January 5 - February 2 the children will be learning the story of Elisha who is a role model of God's compassion.

Special dates to remember are:

January 5: Communion Sunday - children in the 1st-5th grade class will return to the liturgy of communion to sit with their families. After worship (NOT after taking communion) these children (parents are welcome, too) may return to Seaside Shows to watch the rest of the video on Elisha.

January 12: All of the children will be making bread. Please bake it - hot from the oven - when you get home and share it with friends.

January 18-20: This weekend our country celebrates a role model of compassion, Martin Luther King, Jr. Plan to go as a family to one of the MLK Celebration (see elsewhere in newsletter).

February 2: Communion Sunday - children in the 1st-5th grade class will return to the liturgy of communion to sit with their families.

2003 Dates for Your Calendars

Spring Children and Youth Sunday will be April 6 with a practice on Saturday, April 5.

Adult Forum

9:15 -- 10:15 each Sunday Morning in the Vaughan Room

January 5 - Fawn Pattison (one of our own) will discuss her work with the "Agricultural Resources Center."

January 12 - Chris Fitzsimon, Executive Director of the Common Sense Foundation, will talk on "What Happened in the General Assembly and What We Can Expect From the Upcoming Session."

January 19, 26, and February 2 and 9 - Howard Miller has arranged four sessions on the Challenges to Public Education.

OUR PEOPLE

Peg Hulslander retired from her work as Program Director for StepUP Ministry as of December 31, 2002. In a full-page tribute to her in the StepUP newsletter, accompanied by a beautiful photograph of Peg, John Bush, Executive Director says "How richly blessed we have been!" Further tributes mention her "embracing spirit" and that she "genuinely cares." All of us who know her heartily agree with the accolades.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

CUCC welcomes to our membership Eugene Cookmeyer, Marlene Mueller and Sue Rogge. Eugene is the proud father of David and Jonny who you will see with him in church. Marlene has been so kind as to serve as our organist on occasions. Sue is a clinical social worker in private practice with a background in ministry. She'll soon be working with CUCC's middle schoolers.

LET US CELEBRATE

Join the Southern Conference in the celebration of our call to **Stephen W. Camp** to be our Conference Minister. The event is Sunday, January 19, 2003 at 6:00 pm, Ebenezer United Church of Christ in Burlington, NC.

SPECIAL DAYS

Youth Birthdays

January Birthdays*

1/3/95 – Emma Paul

1/13/87 – Sarah Huffstetler

1/17/94 – David Cookmeyer

1/17/94 – Andrea Osborne-Newman

1/25/91 – Charles Fletchinger

February Birthdays*

2/5/89 – Kat Griggs

2/5/92 – Abby Smith

2/6/93 – Elena Briere

2/15/00 – Gloria Difuidi

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