

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,

In recent weeks, the North Carolina Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality has been formed. The coalition's aim is to offer a progressive religious voice in the debate over same-sex marriage.

In recent days we have seen how the judicial system in Massachusetts has declared it unlawful to deny same sex partners the right to marriage licenses and the civil rights that marriage affords under its state constitution. In response there has been a flood of same sex partners choosing marriage. I celebrate the joy and love they are expressing in commitment to one another.

Yet, these are critical days in the struggle for marriage equality. A constitutional amendment will soon be put forward in the North Carolina Legislature that would define marriage as strictly between a man and a woman. The time has come to voice our opposition to any constitutional amendment that would restrict the civil rights of any group of our citizens.

The North Carolina Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality has drafted a statement for religious leaders to sign and support. I have done so, as have other UCC clergy in the Triangle Area.

The content of the "Declaration" is as follows:

North Carolina Religious Coalition for Marriage Equality Declaration of Religious Leaders April 19, 2004

"The most fundamental human right, after the necessities of food, clothing and shelter, is the right to affection and the supportive love of other human beings. We become most fully human when we love another person. We can grow in our capacity to be human - to be loving - in a family unit. This right to love and form a family is so fundamental that our United States Constitution takes it for granted in its dedication to 'secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.' The North Carolina Constitution likewise affirms the 'inalienable rights' of human beings to 'life, liberty, the enjoyment of the fruits of their own labor, and the pursuit of happiness.'

"Throughout history, tyrants have known that by denying the right of oppressed peoples to form and nurture families, they can kill the spirit of those peoples. From the shameful history of slavery in America, the injustice of forbidding people to marry is evident as a denial of a basic human right. The American laws forbidding interracial marriage, now struck down, were clearly discriminatory. Denial of the status of marriage to those who would freely accept its responsibilities creates legal and economic inequities and social injustice. We feel called to protest and oppose this injustice.

"As religious people, clergy and lay leaders, we are mandated by faith to stand for justice in our common civic life. We oppose the use of sacred texts and religious traditions to deny legal equity to same-gender couples. As concerned citizens we

affirm the liberty of adults of the same gender to love and marry. We insist that no one, especially the state, is allowed to coerce people into marriage or bar two consenting adults, whether of the same or differing genders, from forming the family unit that lets them be more fully loving, thus more fully human.

"We respect the fact that debate and discussion continue in many of our religious communities as to the scriptural, theological and liturgical issues involved. However, we draw on our many faith traditions to arrive at a common conviction. We are resolved that the state should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitments of civil marriage.

"We affirm freedom of conscience in this matter. We recognize that the state may not require religious groups to officiate at, or bless, same-gender marriages. Likewise, a denial of state civil recognition dishonors the religious convictions of those communities and clergy who officiate at, and bless, same-gender marriages. The state may not favor the convictions of one religious group over another by denying individuals their fundamental right to marry and to have those marriages recognized by civil law.

"As faith leaders, we commit ourselves to public action, visibility, education, and mutual support in the service of the right and freedom to marry."

Blessings and Peace,

Steve



Deacons

Steve Halsted will be on vacation June 14 – July 4. In Steve's absence, three of our seminary-trained members will fill the pulpit as follows:
June 20th – **Jane Smith**
June 27th – **Nancy Callaham**
July 4th – **Sue Rogge**

If there are pastoral concerns or emergencies, please first notify the office during office hours. After hours, please contact Caring Committee members **Robert Parrish** (832-1226 (h), 616-1606 (c)) or **Ann McLaughlin** (848-3310). If they're unavailable, contact **Marge Eckels**, chair of the Caring Committee (787-5552)

Memorial/Meditation Garden

A committee has been appointed to give care and guidance to the garden. **Glen Core, Alan Beidler, Carol Kepler, Sue Richey and Geraldine Bryan** will oversee the garden. Please contact one of them if you have any questions or concerns.

THANK YOU!

A huge round of applause goes to our choir director, **Anne Moorman-Smith** and organist **Doug Barrick**, for their leadership and dedication in preparing our chancel choir for the exceptional presentation of Mozart's Requiem on May 9th. We also thank the following members of the choir for their commitment and talent: **Linda Baker, Allan Beidler, Ellen Beidler, Geri Bowen, Bob Hazel, Mac Hulslander, Carol Kepler, Marty Lamb, Jeanne Ledbetter, Joan McAllister, Ann McLaughlin, Kent Miner, and Mike Schafale**. We were fortunate also in having guests join the choir: **Erin Moorman, Jordan Wilson and Joseph Ittoop**, as well as **Elizabeth Huss**, pianist. **Lavon Page** was so kind to record the production.

Religious Education

Adult Forum

As is our custom the Forum will not meet during the summer months. We are planning some wonderful programs for the Fall. If you have suggestions for themes, speakers or whatever, please share them with the Forum Committee: **Cy King, Howard Miller, Ruth Klemmer, Diana Koening, and Grady McCallie**.

Summer Sunday School Schedule

Preschool/Elementary

This summer we will combine our Sunday School classes. We will be covering several different Bible stories and playing a special game using our memory verses from this year.

- June 6** – Jonah and the whale
- June 13** – Jonah and the castor oil plant
- June 20** – The miracles of Elisha
- June 27** – The story of the boy Jesus
- July 4** – The story of John
- July 11** – The two house builders
- July 18** – Memory Verse Game
- July 25** – The beloved daughter
- August 1** – Jesus and the children
- August 8** – Vacation Bible School –
a Heifer Happening
- August 15** – Welcome Back Sunday

A special thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who has taught Sunday School in our preschool and elementary classes this year.

We hope more of you will prayerfully consider teaching as you search for ways to serve the church. All of the lessons are prepared for the teachers. This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know the children. Please join us in the fall!

Fun Night/Vacation Bible School

How does an intergenerational gathering at the church with stories, games, songs, homemade ice cream, pizza, and a chance to help buy a cow for a community sound to you?

We are planning such an event on Tuesday, June 8th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall at the church. We will hear about the Heifer Project and have a chance to make a silo bank, along with enjoying other activities.

Similar events will be held on July 8th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and on August 8th after church. Please circle your calendar for all three dates!

If anyone can make homemade ice cream for the event, please contact **Adrienne Talbot** at 787-8082.

Monday Lunch Group

For the month of June, the group will be reading *The Spiral Staircase* by Karen Armstrong. Bring a sandwich and join in the activities and discussion. We meet every Monday at 12:15 in the Hoffmann Room. Call **Geraldine Bryan** (787-8494) for more information.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

The group is taking a vacation this summer and will reconvene the first Sunday after Labor Day (September 12th).

Wednesday Bible Study

This group meets at Pilgrim House at 6:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. Bring a bag supper. Call **Joan or John Little** (787-0829) for more information. Everyone is welcome to join these lively and interesting discussions.

Property

The Property Ministry has obtained a second estimate of \$6,280 for the sanctuary window replacement from Raleigh Glass and Mirror. An earlier estimate of approximately \$8,500 was obtained from Custom Glass and Doors for the same work. This would involve replacement of all window panes in the sanctuary with a textured glass pattern. Church Council members, during the May 24 meeting, agreed to pursue replacing the glass with the addition of new window frames that would accommodate energy efficient glass. The Property Ministry was directed to obtain an additional estimate for this (an earlier estimate of approximately \$16,000 was provided by Custom Glass and Doors). The congregation will be presented with a final estimated cost and a proposed strategy for payment once the estimates are received. Glass samples will also be available at that time.

Submitted by **Allan Beidler**

Social Justice

Join Peacemakers around the World in Building a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

By the Fellowship of Reconciliation

"We live in a culture of violence. From the tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado to the U.S. bombings of Yugoslavia and Iraq, to the fact that one out of every five American children lives in poverty while we spend billions upgrading our nuclear arsenal--violence surrounds us. It is time to stop the violence and start building a culture of nonviolence.

"A culture of nonviolence values love, compassion, and justice. It rejects violence as a means of solving problems. Instead, it embraces communication, cooperative decision-making, and nonviolent conflict resolution. It ensures freedom, security and equitable relationships. It promotes inner peace, personal transformation, and disarmament."

-- Social Justice Ministry

Welcoming, Fellowship, and Growth

Our Church Newsletter

We welcome your comments, suggestions and input on the church newsletter. We would love to have more information about what our people are doing (anniversaries, trips, graduations, job changes, births, etc.). We also ask that each Ministry and Committee be faithful in submitting articles about their activities in a timely manner.

-- **Susan Lane**, for the Editorial Board

The Women's Group

The group will be meeting Thursday, June 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the Hoffmann room. **Vandy Bradow** will lead a workshop in flower arranging. Bring some clippers, different greenery, flowers from your yard and a vase. For information, call Vandy at 781-5137.

Retirees Group will not meet during the summer. Make plans now to join us in the second Monday in September.

Saturday Men's Group will continue to meet during the summer. The book being read and discussed for the next few weeks will continue to be *Just Peacemaking*, edited by Glen Stassen. It's an anthology of articles by various people on peacemaking.

PUCKER →



UP!!!

The Second Annual CUCC P2e Celebration will be coming on Sunday, July 4. **Everett Noland** will again be supplying the watermelons. Seed spitting contests will be held in three divisions: Men, Women and Children/youth under 18.

Winners (and CUCC record holders) of the 2003 CUCC p2e were:

Men's Division: **Roger Manus**, who used his attorney-honed air power to blow that baby 27' 3'!
Women's Division: **Tracy Keeler**, who is gentle of soul but mighty of lung, with a superb distance of 19'!

Youth Division: Putting almost all of the adults to shame (except Roger, Tracy, and her father Gary), **Abby Smith** overwhelmed the youth division with a distance of 18' 4'!

You have a whole **month** to practice! Lovely and appropriate prizes will be given to the winners!

HELP!! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The WFGM signup board has some blank spaces on it. This board is for the ministry members, but we would welcome help. If there is a specific date that you would be willing to provide some or all of the refreshments and/or are willing to help with set-up for after-worship fellowship time, please contact **Joan McAllister** at 851-9674. Can't cook? Dishwashers are also needed!

Community Outreach



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

In May our congregation contributed **23** basic food bags – a good deal more than the prior month. In the busy days of summer, please mark your calendars before the first Sunday that the bags are due. We continue to strive for **25 bags** each month.

NEED FOR “MEALS ON WHEELS” SUBSTITUTES

Our elderly or disabled residents who require a hot meal every day are unable to take the vacations that the rest of us cherish. Because the regular volunteers occasionally leave town during the summer, the distribution site on Jones Street is in great need of people who will be willing to deliver meals as substitutes.

The job entails delivery of a hot noontime meal. The volunteers pick up the meals at 707 W. Jones St. (1 block north of Hillsborough Street and east of St. Mary’s Street) between 11:00 am and 12. The meals for each route are pre-packed in a cooler and hotpack. It often helps to bring an extra plastic shopping bag or basket to carry all of the small items for those homes that require two meals. Routes can vary from 5-15 stops and run through south and west Raleigh. Most of the routes (designated by a color name and laid out with explicit directions and a map) usually take no longer than 45-60 minutes. If you can bring a friend, the job becomes much simpler because one can drive while the other navigates and delivers. Often we turn the job into a social occasion and stop for lunch at some fun place after we have finished!

When calling for last-minute substitutes, the Meals office tries to place you on a route with which you are familiar. For those of you who might simply be willing to substitute on the routes which our church

is committed to serving, CUCC delivers 4 routes on the second Wednesday of every month. Currently we have very faithful volunteers who regularly deliver to the same route every month. But occasionally we also need additional help. If you would be willing to have your name placed on either of the ‘sub’ lists, and/or just need to know more about this very worthwhile program, please contact either **Carol Clark** at the office (787-6422) or **Carol Kepler** (787-7420) and we will relay the information.

-- Carol Kepler

Our People

Our Young People’s Birthdays*

6/1/00 – Cammy Riemann
6/4/97 – Isaac Milandu
6/12/93 – Angelina DeVito
6/13/95 – Carson Roach-Howell
6/24/95 – Jonny Cookmeyer
6/30/97 – Ernesto Rivera-Saavedra

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

We look forward to hearing from **Marge Eckels** and **Judy Smallwood** about their trip to Eastern Europe – Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Vienna!

and from

Vandy Bradow about her trip to Belgrade!

Bob and Kerma Hazel and their children and grandchildren attended the World War II Memorial dedication in Washington, D.C. While there, they joined **Mark Denlinger** and some of his family members.

Congratulations

Russell Williams (**Sue Cottle's** nephew) graduated in May from NCSU with a degree in Architecture. He will return to Raleigh this fall and to NCSU to work on a graduate degree.

Cailen Waddell graduated from NC School of the Arts with a BSA in Lighting Design. This summer

he will be in charge of lighting at Page Auditorium in Durham for the performances of the American Dance Festival.

Roster

Add:

Toni Maes, tonimaes@yahoo.com, 880-9229.

Change:

John and Joan Little – jlittle17@nc.rr.com.

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 in 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, Nancy Keppel, Jo Banks, and Audrey Leiser.**

The Wider Community

Rich Park

Please consider being a help to this mission of our church by attending the meeting once a month and contributing your advice and concern to these 500 low-income people to whom our church and four other churches provide housing here in Raleigh.

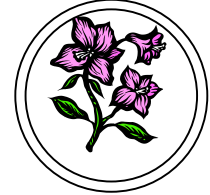
--Everette Noland

The Wider Church

The Annual Meeting of the Southern Conference UCC is being held at Elon University on June 10-12. Pastor Steve will be attending along with Dawn Pickett, who will be our official delegate. Other ordained clergy are encouraged to attend and exercise their right to vote on issues. Visitors are encouraged to attend as your time avails. Please consult the Meetings' Agenda on the bulletin board to determine your interests.

Other Meetings and Events

“Circles of Connection” – a Mandala Painting Workshop is being held at CUCC on June 2, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. Please pre-register at 302-3745. See the bulletin board for details and price.



Creating Mandalas

Mandala, a Sanskrit word for *circle*, has been used as a tool for transformation since the beginning of time by every culture in the world. It has many purposes: healing and connecting us to Divine Energy, or our intuition, our creative self, the Source of unconditional love, our Higher Power, or whatever concept we use to describe that part of ourselves beyond knowing. When we are connected, we receive information in the form of healing symbols.

Since the information is non-verbal, the mandala often gives us insights that we could get in no other way. In addition, the process is often fun and stimulates our creativity. The process of creating a mandala puts us into an altered or meditative state, which slows down time and helps us to become more mindful, more intentional, and more loving. We become channels for Divine Energy or find a deeper form of self-expression. The healing qualities of the mandala touch us on a physical, mental, emotional, and/or spiritual level. The process often opens our hearts to unconditional love from a Source beyond ourselves, not only for our healing, but also for others.

Mandalas can be created individually, alone, or in a group. Sound and light are the major components of the mandala. The beauty of the mandala process is that it transcends all religions and can connect us at a spiritual level one to another.

Community United Church of Christ
814 Dixie Trail
Raleigh, NC 27607
June 2004 Newsletter

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The deadline for our July Newsletter is June 14.
The Newsletter can be found on our web page:
www.communityucc.org

A Month of Sundays

**June 6, First Sunday
after Pentecost**
Food Bags Due
9:00 – 9:30 Taizé;
**10:30 Worship
Service and Church
School;**
Lectionary: Prov 8:1-4,
22-31; Ps 8; Rom 5:1-5;
Jn 16:12-15

**June 13, Second
Sunday after
Pentecost**
9:00 – 9:30 Taizé;
**10:30 Worship Service
and Church School;**
Lectionary:1 Kings
21:1-10, (11-14), 15-
21a; Ps 5:1-8 OR
2 Sam 11:26-12:10,
13-15; Ps 32;
Gal 2:15-21;
Lk 7:36-8:3

**June 20, Third Sunday
after Pentecost**
**9:00-9:30 Taizé
(Communion);**
**10:30 Worship Service
and Church School;**
**Worship Leader –
Jane Smith;**
Lectionary:
1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7),
8-15a; Ps 42 and 43 OR
Isa 65:1-9; Ps 22:19-28;
Gal 3:23-29;
Lk 8:26-39

**June 27, Fourth
Sunday after
Pentecost**
9:00-9:30 Taizé;
**10:30 Worship
Service and Church
School;**
**Worship Leader –
Nancy Callaham**
Lectionary:
2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Ps
77:1-2, 11-20 OR 1
Kings 19:15-16,
19-21; Ps 16;
Gal 5:1, 13-25;
Lk 9:51-62