

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nurturing Spiritual Growth and Working for Social Justice

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Stephen S. Halsted, Pastor

March 2002

Lectionary for February

March 3, Third Sunday in Lent:

Exod. 17:1-7; Ps.95; Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

March 10, Fourth Sunday in Lent:

I Sam. 16:1-13; Ps.23; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

March 17, Fifth Sunday in Lent:

Ezek. 37:1-14; Ps.130; Rom. 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

March 24, Sixth Sunday in Lent (Palm Sunday):

Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29; Matt. 21:1-11

March 31, Easter Sunday

Col.3:1-4, Acts 10:34-43, John 20:1-18

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your many expressions of sympathy upon the death of my father on February 12. Your cards, kind words and the beautiful flowering plant from the Caring Committee have lifted my spirit and shown me that we are bonding together as a new church family. In the midst of my sorrow there have been many moments of joy because of the genuine expressions of caring that you have blessed me with. The Risen Spirit of Christ is very evident here at CUCC! Thank you.

On the weekend of March 8 & 9 I plan to attend an overnight retreat being sponsored by the Southern Conference UCC. It is titled: "Dialogue and Discernment" and its purpose is to be a part of God's healing work in the Southern Conference by facilitating dialogues that heal feelings of exclusion and division within our church family. We hope to have 4 or 5 people from CUCC attend so that we can begin to rebuild positive relationships once again with some congregations that we have drifted apart from in the Raleigh area. Facilitator for the retreat will be Annette Simmons author of 2 books titles: Territorial Games and A Safe Place for Dangerous Truths: Using Dialogue to Overcome Fear and Distrust.

In closing my message I want to encourage the committees and individuals that have been learning the Hebrew meditation mantra Ruach-Shalom to be diligent in your spiritual practice. These words have

powerful transformative value to empower our lives spiritually & to guide us in our quest for the Realm of God. If anyone would like personal training in the use of this form of meditation, please call for an appointment.

Ruach-Shalom,

PRAYERS

Please remember in your prayers: Prayers

Following are the names of those who need to be remembered in prayer: **Sarah Hoffman**, coping with cancer and Steve's mother, **Elinor Halsted**, mourning the death of her husband, Raymond G. Halsted, Jr.

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

Calling All Committees

We plan to hold an informal and informative get-together with all the committees on Sunday, Feb. 3rd in the Vaughan Wing right after the regular Sunday service. Refreshments will be served.

This is a wonderful opportunity for committee members to learn about the mission and the activities of their committee and of other committees in the church. Any questions, contact Susan Lane, 846-5881.

Auction Action April 20th

Ready to indulge yourself? Treat yourself (oh, OK-- maybe a spouse, or a friend) to a gourmet meal, a massage, a getaway weekend---AND feel like you've done a good deed---AND gotten a good deal! It's 'way better than buying Girl Scout cookies: It's the CUCC Auction, and it's coming SOON. Whether you are a donor or a bidder or both, get ready, 'cause here it comes!

You'll have a chance to saunter about with wine (or soft drink) and nibbles, review the list of tempting offerings, and plot bidding strategy before the action starts. Then it's on to the main event, with services and specialties on the block to the highest bidder. There's no silent auction this year: everything's live and in color!

Remember, proceeds from the auction are already built into the 2002 budget. We did well last year. Now we all need to make it happen this year!! Circle your calendar for April 20 and BE THERE!

CUCC Auction Pledge forms included in the newsletter.

Youth Meeting

Next Youth Group Meeting will be held Sunday, March 10 at 6 p.m. Pizza and dessert will be served. Youth are asked to bring a CD with a favorite song to share with others. Be prepared to tell why you like it and what it says to you!

The Monday Lunch Group will continue studying The Good Heart – a Buddhist's perspective on the teachings of Jesus by the Dalai Lama Bring a bag

lunch and join us any Monday at 12:15. For more information, call Sarah Hoffman, 781-2373.

Habitat for Humanity VBS

The focus of this year's Vacation Bible School will be Habitat for Humanity. Pastor Steve Halsted noted that the Habitat organization has created an intergeneration VBS kit. This intergenerational VBS is scheduled for the week of July 15th.

CUCC Retirees Group

The Retirees will gather Monday, March 11th, for our annual Games Day. The event will begin at 11:00a.m. and will include a new game introduced by Rev. Halsted. Come – bring a sandwich and enjoy the fun!

Bus Tour

March 26th-30th, 2002 will be the Civil Rights Historic Bus Tour through Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham, AL, Atlanta, GA, and Memphis, TN. For more information, call 832-3193. CUCC's own Margaret Osbourne took this tour last year.

Johns River Valley Camp

March 9, 2002: Spring clean-up and work day; contact Curly (stumb@boone.net) regarding projects and to confirm participation. The camp will provide breakfast and lunch for participants (please RSVP for meal count).

April 12-14, 2002: Annual Mothers' Retreat

The Messiah Danced

Carolina Ballet will perform Handel's Messiah, the story of Christ, under the artistic direction of Robert Weiss, in association with members of the North Carolina Symphony and the professional chorus of the Raleigh Oratorio Society. Memorial Auditorium, evenings March 28-30 and matinees March 30-31. Church groups of 10 or more will get a special price on reserved seating of \$15 for all performances. To purchase tickets call Jan Cumberworth, Group Sales Manager, Carolina Ballet (919) 469-8823. Please mention the name of your church when ordering tickets.

Senior High Bible Study

Sarah McGiverin continues to lead an hour-long Bible study in the Bradow room each Monday beginning at 4:00p.m.

“Just Peace Meditation Breakfasts”

Dorothee Soelle, a German theologian who taught for many years at Union Theological Seminary in NY, writes in her book *The Silent Cry. Mysticism and Resistance*, “In the present scenario there are global players on one side, and satiated, isolated individuals on the other. But the groups who are committed to voluntary effort, critical openness, and taking their own initiative are the bearers of hope.... What sustains those groups? What keeps them awake? Why do they not give up? I believe that it is elements of mysticism that cannot be extinguished.”

In continuing the “Just Peace” forum discussions, five “Just Peace Meditation Breakfasts” will be held in the Pilgrim House on Saturday mornings through Mar. 16, 7:45–9:00 a.m. (On Mar. 23, there will be a “Silent Saturday” retreat at the church.) We’ll begin with a half hour of mostly silent Quaker-style meditation to be followed by breakfast, during which we’ll discuss possible peace-promoting actions. Please RSVP to the church office so we can plan the food, but drop-ins are also welcome. For more information, contact Edith Sylla, 782-1641, or Cy and Carolyn King, 787-5461.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Wider Outreach

Habitat for Humanity

For those wishing to find out more about the Habitat for Humanity project and how they can help, contact Jim Smith, 832-2213, or jwmsmith@bellsouth.net. We will need 20 people per Saturday for 12 to 20 weeks.

Social Action

Some quotes from the Social Action Committee:

“Osama bin Laden wants to be a new Saladin (who expelled the crusaders from Jerusalem) and the new manager of the natural resources of the Arab world.” Justo Lacunza, Vatican expert on Islam

We human beings learn best how to love when we’re a bit broken, when our plans fall apart, when our myths of self-sufficiency and safety are shattered. Apocalypse is meant to bring us to our senses, allowing us a sober painful glimpse of what is possible in the new life we build from the ashes of the old.” Kathleen Norris writing in Sojourners Magazine on September 11, 2001

Perhaps these words from Jim Wallis of Sojourners will be helpful as we continue to ask “What does it mean to be a Just Peace Church when our Nation is at War?”

“In this crisis, Christians must continue to defend the innocent from military reprisal, prevent a dangerous and wider war, and oppose the unilateralism of superpowers. But we must also help stop bin Laden, his networks of violence, and the threat they pose to everything we love and value. All that presents difficult questions for peacemakers, but it is a challenge we dare not turn away from.”

“No one has all the answers. Humility is a good trait for Christian peacemakers, while self-righteousness is both spiritually inappropriate and politically self-defeating. This much is clear: Jesus calls us to be peacemakers, not just peacelovers. That will inevitably call us to face hard questions with no easy answers. In the end, Christian peacemaking is more a path than a position.”

“When it comes to terrorism, America pledges its full commitment to whatever resources it takes, but when it comes to poverty, America calls for volunteerism.” Jim Wallis of Sojourners on the State of the Union

Adult Education Committee

Ida B. Wells

On March 24, Dr. Linda O McMurry, Professor of History at NCSU and author of To Keep the Waters Troubled: The life of Ida B. Wells will speak to the Adult Forum. It so happens that in the “Witness for Justice Newsletter” that comes to us from our national Justice and Peace Ministry the following words written by Bernice Powell Jackson appeared. They should help us understand the importance of this remarkable woman and hopefully will lead

many in the congregation to the Forum on March 24, to hear more about her.

“I recently saw an incredible new play by Tazewell Thompson. Called Constant Star, it is the story of Ida B. Wells-Barnett, one of my own spirit guides. A journalist born the year before the Civil War ended, Ida Wells was in many ways ahead of her time. While black men such as Booker T. Washington basked in the glory of white America, as a woman she was deemed inferior in intellect and abilities. Even her white female counterparts such as Susan B. Anthony, did not see her as their equals.

As the editor of the Memphis newspaper Free Speech, Ida Wells began to see that many of those black men who were being lynched in the South after being accused of raping or even speaking to white women were innocent of these charges. Many were black businessmen who threatened white businesses or were men who stood up for the rights of blacks. Thousands were being lynched across the South, sometimes after being burned, tortured, castrated or dismembered. Often whole towns attended the lynchings, with parents bringing their children and picnic baskets (some say that is where the term picnic came from – picking a n- to lynch.)

Blacks were unable to go to local sheriffs and elected officials turned a blind eye. So, Ida Wells began a one-woman campaign to take the story of lynching to people across this nation and around the world. She wrote tirelessly about the victims and horrors of lynching. Because of her determined campaign, she was run out of Memphis and told that if she ever returned she would face lynching herself.

Ida Wells escaped to Chicago, where she continued her public speaking and writing campaigns against lynching, met and married her husband and had children. She refused to stop forcing this nation to confront these atrocities, working with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and others until lynching was stopped. It was not until the 1930’s that the large-scale lynching of black men and women ended in this nation, but small numbers of lynchings occurred into the 1960’s. Even today, we occasionally hear rumors of lynchings in small towns in the South.

In these days where talk of terrorism is often heard, it is important to remember our own American brand of terrorism. More than 3,000 died in the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks.

But an estimated 4,742 black men and women died by lynching between 1882 and 1968. This, too, is a part of our Black History and part of our American History as well. Lest we forget.”

Other Forum programs for March are:

March 3 “Long Term Care” speaker our own Bill Lamb

March 10 “Future Food Supply” speaker Dr. Tommy Carter

March 17 “More on Immigration”

March 24 “Ida Be. Wells” speaker Dr. Linda McMurry

Caring Committee

Nametags – The Caring Committee is making some changes to procedures around our nametags. Judy Smith has volunteered to make a cover for an additional hanger so we can have more name tags available and they will be more spread out, so it should be easier to find. Bill Lamb is still in charge of making nametags, so if you want one, or you need a new one, let him know. Nametags can also be made in the church office so if you don’t see Bill, you can leave a note on the Caring Community roll and the office can make you one. New nametags and stick on tags will be put out on a table in the narthex next to the hangers. Please remember to have your nametags with you and wear them when you go the Vaughan Wing after the service. That’s when folks really do have a chance to make connections.

Eckel’s Bequest

The Wider Outreach Committee is currently accepting suggestions for the Eckel’s Bequest. Have an idea? Contact a member of the committee.

Communications Committee

Attention Committee Chairs.

The Communications Committee anticipates publishing a new pictorial directory next fall,

probably early in October. It would be helpful if all committees would begin now collecting pictures of their activities so that we would have a good representation of interesting shots to select from, showing the varied aspects of our church life.

Volunteering Opportunities

Appalachian Service Project

The ASP is scheduled for the week of June 9th with fundraisers and meetings beginning in March. If you would like to participate and haven't signed up, contact Mark Denlinger, 847-5131. More information as the date approaches.

The Annual CUCC Auction is coming in April. If you would be willing to help with any aspect, contact Anne Pope, 872-2380. Some volunteers are still needed to help with the various duties.

SPECIAL DAYS

Lent

Lent consists of the forty days before Easter, not counting Sundays. Therefore, the first day of Lent is always a Wednesday. Lent now consists of two parts: the four days from Ash Wednesday to the First Sunday of Lent, and the thirty-six days between then and Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday). The second part of Lent is the time of Passiontide. Many Catholics adjust their diets and their lives as a sacrifice to enhance their spiritual Lenten journey.

The number 40 is a significant number in the Old Testament and the Jewish faith. Moses approached God on Sinai and Horeb only after a purification fast of forty days. Christ, after His baptism, began to prepare Himself for public life by a fast of forty days in the desert, during which time, Satan tried to tempt Him to discover whether Christ was indeed the Son of God.

www.computingcorner.com

Youth Birthdays

March Birthdays*

3/3/88 – Amanda Bowen
3/21/83 – Mimi Luvumina Nzinga
3/24/90 – Nicholas DeVito

April Birthdays*

4/11/89 – Austin Osborne-Newman
4/15/90 – Z.B. Haislip
4/21/94 – Sidney Keyes

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

Our People

Special thanks to Chris Schafale for her pottery gifts to the church. Chris donated a beautiful pitcher for use in communion and mugs for use in Pilgrim House.

We thank Joan McAllister for her response to our plea for pots and pans for use in the Pilgrim House kitchen.

Toni R. Maes

c/o American Peace Corps

G.P.O. Box 613

Kathmandu, NEPAL

*(Feb. 20, 2002-May 1, 2002, include **PCT** after my name. May 1, 2002-May 1, 2004, include **PCV** after my name.)*

Toni's mom has forwarded Toni's emails to the church office. (excerpts from her 3 emails

#1 - Hello! I'm here! I'm alive and I've survived the coldest shower in the world! They supposedly fixed the hot water to our room today so hopefully that will be the last cold shower I have for a while. The food is mostly okay. A lot of spicy stuff but I've been trying to cut the hotness with a lot of white

rice. I've heard that I'll most likely be in the Terai, that borders India. This country is so poor. It's very depressing. As we flew in and were driven to the hotel, it really reminded me of Mexico. It's all dirty and garbage is everywhere. Apparently, PC people are highly respected and I should be fine. For my address, you can either put PCT or PCV OR N/194. I'm with the 194th PC group to be here.

#2 After four more shots and a pretty lax day at the American "compound" a group of us decided to go to the Durbar Square, which has a ton of temples. It's supposed to be this great holy place, but it's wholly depressing. We were approached from every direction all the time by people asking us to buy things. They have NOTHING! Absolutely NOTHING! It was so overwhelmingly depressing.

#3... It is hard. I know God wouldn't have put me here if He didn't know I could handle it. Like that sermon of Pastor M's a while back - that God gives difficulties to people who can handle it, therefore, the challenges that I experience are a compliment to my abilities. A group of us went to lunch at a Middle Eastern rest. and I had hummus and pita bread. ...Then a bunch of us went to the "Monkey Temple" Swayan... something...It's west of Kathmandu. Tomorrow we leave for Nayan... and Barahat Pur (sp. phonetically) for our training. We'll take a five hour bus ride that should be beautiful. We are in good hands and we will be safe. There have been some incidents in the area of our training but I believe we will be safe. On the 27th I'll move in with my host family.

Announcements

Pledge or Financial contributions (\$\$\$) sent to the church office should have "Assistant Treasurer" on the envelope.

The church received the following thank you note from Jim and Susan Walton, Isabella's nephew and his wife:

"We do appreciate all your help and concern. Isabella treasured your friendship. Please give thanks to all the wonderful people at the church for all the efforts they put forth to help us in this difficult time. Thank you for everything."

New Office Manager

Hello to CUCC. I'm Carol Clark, your new Office Manager. I have been welcomed by so many of you kind folks. I came on board February 11 and was greeted almost immediately by Cy King, my original D.H. Hill Library boss, which then tells you I know Carolyn, Dot & IT Littleton, *Isabella*, Helen Brown, and Paul & Judy Kiel. I retired from the library after 35 years of working with all phases of periodicals, including the business of obtaining, receiving, paying and maintenance which prepares me for the many hats I shall be trying to wear in this position. I have already been challenged, which is part of what makes me love and stay with a job. The time I am not in the church office, I can be found "playing" in my yard/gardens or in a pottery studio (where I'm taking lessons to learn how to throw pottery and hand build). I want to thank those who have already volunteered their time to help me through this transition.

Tiffany Maes

We welcome Tiffany as our new regular nursery attendant each Sunday.

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March 2002 Newsletter

**April Newsletter Deadline is Monday,
March 25th.**

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

How did you do??

Last month's scrambled hymns were as follows:

- o Jesus Loves Me!
- o We shall Overcome
- o Love divine all Loves Excelling