

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nurturing Spiritual Growth and Working for Social Justice

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Stephen S. Halsted, Pastor

March 2004

Lectionary for March

March 7th, Second Sunday in Lent

Gen. 15:1-12, 17-18; Ps 27; Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 13:31-35
or Lk 9:28-36.

March 14th, Third Sunday in Lent

Isa 55:1-9; Ps 63:1-8; 1 Cor 10:1-13; Lk 13:1-9.

March 21st, Fourth Sunday in Lent

Josh 5:9-12; Ps 32; 2 Cor 5:16-21; Lk 15:1-3, 11b-32.

March 28th, Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isa 43:16-21; Ps 126; Phil 3:4b-14; Jn 12:1-8.



Dear Friends,

Our very name, Community UCC, reflects the importance we place on being a faithful community leader in Raleigh. We have actively engaged in building community strength and cohesiveness around social justice issues that seek to banish prejudices that destructively divide our community. To this end we have actively supported desegregation, ecumenism, interfaith dialogue, women's issues of empowerment, inclusion issues of homosexual persons, fair treatment of migrant workers and refugees, and children's rights. We also have worked to better our community by addressing issues of human violence, world peace, and protecting the environment.

As you can see this is a broad endeavor that brings us in contact with many issues and many different groups that specialize in certain issues. In this work I want to lift up one particular group that is new to the scene here in Raleigh. It is called ROAR, and you may have heard it discussed here at CUCC. ROAR is short for Raleigh Organizing for Action and Results. It is a grass roots style organization

that first seeks to build community connections among individuals called "delegates" who then tackle "action items" within the broader community of Raleigh to improve conditions for the disadvantaged and disempowered members of our community. Most "delegates" come from faith communities. "Action items" are determined at General Assemblies and relate to issues like affordable housing, jobs, public transportation, education, and health. Delegates may join action teams, strategy teams, or leaders teams that carry out the work and seek to influence city councilors and the mayor's office to accomplish their goals.

Our own Jane Smith is a member of the Education Action Team. She will report to the next Assembly to be held on Tuesday, March 30th, 7:00 - 8:30pm at the Vital Links School on the corner of Rock Quarry Rd. and East Lenoir St. CUCC is looking to expand our number of delegates and would welcome your participation. Please call the church office (787-6422) if you can attend this meeting. They are dynamic and alive!!

I have been attending ROAR Clergy Caucus meetings and have been impressed by the racial and religious diversity of people involved in ROAR. I feel it has unlimited potential to be a major force in creating a better community here in Raleigh.

Isn't that what we here at Community UCC are all about?!

Blessings and Peace,

Steve

MEETINGS and EVENTS

Peace Action – On March 1 at 7 p.m., the Rev. Stephen Sizer will speak at Pullen Baptist Church, Poteat Chapel. His topic will be “Christian Zionism.” This event is sponsored by the Coalition for Peace with Justice and Wake County Peace Action.

Retirees will meet in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall on Monday, March 8th at 11 a.m. for a program about birds and bird watching. Lena Gallitano, a member of the Audubon Society, will talk about the history of the Audubon Society and bird watching in Raleigh and Wake County. Bring a bag lunch. Beverage and dessert will be provided.

Women's Support Group will meet on Thursday, March 18 at 7 p.m. in the Bradow Room. The program will be announced in a bulletin in March. Questions? Call Sally Cook, 467-3642.

DEACONS MINISTRY

The Deacons met February 11. Bill Lamb was announced as the new Vice-Chair, taking the place vacated by new Chair Peg Hulslander. Plans for Lent were a major topic of discussion.

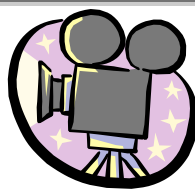
The Deacons, in response to a number of requests from CUCC members, have made arrangements for **an additional Sunday communion opportunity**. Beginning in March, communion will be served on the third Sunday of each month during the 9:00 Taize service. This half-hour service, open to all, is a time of silence, scripture, and singing.

The Deacons also invite all our community to a **Lenten mini-retreat, “Experiencing Communion”**

The retreat will take place at CUCC on April 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., the Saturday before Palm Sunday. The planning committee (Ellen Beidler, Vandy Bradow, Nancy Callaham, Tom DeVito, Steve Halsted, Peg Hulslander, Jeanne Ledbetter, Maria Riemann, and Sue Rogge) has designed a time for us to prepare for Holy Week together.

Sue Rogge will gather us to begin the day at 9:30 for a brief time of scripture, prayer, and song, led by Maria Riemann. After that, you’ll have the opportunity to choose from several self-guided activities: audio, video, mixed media, finger labyrinths, and encounters with pen and paper. Sometime during the morning we will be called to the kitchen to interact with bread dough! Lunch will be accompanied by music and readings, and followed by an opportunity to choose another activity. About 1:30, we’ll be led by Nancy Callaham in a group movement to prepare for the 2:00 communion service planned by Sue Rogge.

The day is intended to be accessible to all ages and all levels of mobility. Please plan to come for all or part of this 9:30- 2:30 experience. If you’re coming to lunch (Jeanne’s soup plus sandwiches), please sign up. Sheets will be available in the Narthex during March. Qs? More info? Call Vandy Bradow or another of the committee members.



DINNER WITH DAVE

April Fund Raiser
Gourmet Dinner and Movie
Saturday, April 17
\$15/person

for details
See Mary Pruneau or Anne Pope

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council met February 19 and reports that the Constitution and By-Laws have been put in good order. These were recently mailed to the membership along with a motion to add “also” to one section of the Constitution. The motion has been scheduled for the next congregational meeting. **That meeting has been set for March 28 after worship.**

Bill Lamb will be Vice-Chair of the Deacons Ministry.

The pink glass in the Sanctuary windows will be replaced. The Property Ministry welcomes congregational input for choosing the type of new window.

Authorizations by line item in the budget were given to the Treasurer to provide money to refund Cy King for the \$645.81 he advanced to get the medicine to the Congo.

CUCC will be writing a letter to the surrounding neighborhood newcomers welcoming them and inviting them to attend our services.

Marketplace for Meaningful Gifts is in the planning stage for this year.

Upcoming opportunities discussed at the Council:

Global Warming (Climate Change) from the N.C. Council of Churches will have a March 13 conference.

ROAR will be having a March 30 General Assembly.

There is a fund raising event – “Dinner with Dave” – scheduled for April 17.

There will be a National Youth Event in July in Knoxville, TN.

There are plans to hold the auction this year in September on the 18 or 25.

-submitted by Everette Noland

COMMUNITY OUTREACH **MINISTRY**

One Great Hour of Sharing

CUCC will collect the One Great Hour of Sharing offering on March 21. OGHS is an offering that extends far beyond our church, with support coming from the United Church of Christ along with eight other Protestant denominations and Church World Service. In 2003, our contributions to OGHS provided emergency relief missions around the globe, from trauma recovery in Sierra Leone, to

humanitarian assistance in North Korea, to Hurricane Isabel recovery in USA.

But there is more. Through OGHS, we reach out to:

Build sustainable communities. OGHS supports self-help programs in more than 80 nations to build sustainable communities that enable people and communities to stand against and rise above hunger, disease, illiteracy, and other forces of injustice that deny and destroy dignity.

Respond to disaster. OGHS provides emergency and long-term assistance to people in the aftermath of hurricanes, tornados, floods, fires, technological disasters, civil strife, war, or other natural or human-caused events. On average, OGHS responds to a disaster once every 2.5 days.

Minister to refugees. OGHS responds with advocacy and help, hope and hospitality for people who have been uprooted from their home of origin. More than 30 million of the world's people are uprooted at any given time.

On March 21, bring your hearts and your checkbooks to share in these important missions!



In February our members contributed 18 emergency food bags, plus some miscellaneous food items. Urban Ministries now places a value of \$16 for each food bag. That means that our February contribution was worth \$288! Keep those bags coming!

Reminder: **Food Bags** will be collected on **Sunday, March 7th.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Adult Forum meets in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall, 9:15-10:15 a.m. each Sunday morning.

Forum Topics

March 7 – Grady McCallie will kick off a series on the Environment and Conservation.

March 14 – Carrie Clark, Executive Director of the Conservation Council of North Carolina will discuss the work of the Council.

March 21 – to be announced

March 28 – Dr. Ken Vickery, “The Situation in South Africa.” Dr. Vickery teaches history at North Carolina State University and was in South Africa recently.

Sunday School News

Preschool – 4th grade:

During this rotation, beginning February 29 and concluding on Easter Sunday, we will be studying Moses and the wilderness wanderings. This promises to be an exciting time in Sunday School! Each week the children will be working on a cumulative project that they will take home on Easter Sunday. Don’t miss Sunday School! You will love what we have planned!

Do you have? – Could we borrow?

- 1) A video of “The Ten Commandments” movie with Charlton Heston.
- 2) A recording tape or CD of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “mountaintop” speech?

If so, please call Anne Bailey Zschau at 424-8122. Thank you!

Who Likes Field Trips, Food and Fun?

Think June. Imagine two weeknight sessions of study and fun culminating in a Saturday field trip, all focused on taking steps on a justice issue. Maybe this will even kick off a year of focused action. This year's multigenerational Vacation Bible School might be just such an occasion. Ideas so far? What if we focused on Heifer Project - ate together, learned and did something hands-on for

two weeknights, then culminated with a Saturday trip to a goat farm and a picnic and bonfire at Jordan Lake? Or how about studying AIDS in Africa? What tugs at your heart?

If you would be willing to organize a piece of our June VBS, call Jane Smith at 787-6539. If we get enough offers, Jane will call the workers together so you can set the details. Then you're off and running. Tasks you could pull together? Two weeknight dinners; two activities for children, two activities for adults or two activities for everyone; plans for the field trip; publicity and registration; two set up/clean ups. We already have two key organizers so join the fun.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

An Active Faith: What’s Charity without Justice?

Here are some words from Yonce Shelton, director of public policy for Call to Renewal. The Social Justice Ministry found them helpful and wishes to share with the Congregation. (from *Sojourners Magazine*, January 2004.)

“Why should Christians become involved with political activism when donating to a local food bank or homeless shelter seems to ‘do more?’ Why should Christians try to influence public policy in a political system that is intimidating and frustrating, when they can ‘see’ the benefits of volunteer efforts? Simply put, helping low-income people is not an either/or proposition. It requires a commitment to charity and justice....

“Working for justice is hard because it requires us to evaluate – from a theological perspective – government, elected leaders’ priorities, and, most important our priorities....

“Christians committed to helping neighbors escape the grip of poverty can spark a movement for change. The fuel to sustain such commitment is our theology and Christ’s examples of charity and justice.... Will we continue to toss crumbs from the table to poor people, instead of giving them a seat at that table?”

Social Justice Calendar

March 2 –Public Hearing on Resolution to Revise the Patriot Act. Please plan to be there. 7 p.m. at the City Council Chambers.

March 3 – “Stop the Arms Race” vigil. 12 noon on the Fayetteville Street Mall.

March 5-6 – The 2004 Robert E. Seymour Symposium “Faith, Peacemaking and the New World Disorder.” Keynote speaker, Rev. Joan Campbell, former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches. See the Social Action Bulletin Board for details.

March 20 – “Global Day of Action Against War and Occupations.” 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Fayetteville, NC. See Social Action Bulletin Board for details.

March 28 – “A Community Conference” with Rabbi Michael Lerner, Founder and Editor of Tikkun Magazine. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Millennium Hotel, 2800 Campus Walk Ave., Durham, N.C. (located off 15-501 near Duke University. Pre-registration \$36, \$40 at the door. Free to students and low income. See Social Action Bulletin Board for details or call Mara Evans 781-8424 or go to <http://triangletikkun.tikkun.org>

April 4-9 – “Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace.” We walk during Holy Week – from Palm Sunday to Good Friday – to affirm our belief that we need fair trade and a change in current immigration policies, we need peace not war. See Social Action Bulletin Board for further details.

The Serenity Prayer

“God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things that should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.” This famous prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr is the title of a memoir, The Serenity Prayer: Faith and Politics in Times of Peace and War, by Niebuhr’s daughter Elisabeth Sifton.

These concluding words from Sifton’s memoir seem to have special meaning, especially for those

of us who are nearer the end than the beginning of life. “So we must persevere under all trials. We shall probably never have enough courage to change what must be changed. The grace to accept with serenity that which cannot be changed will not easily come to us. And the wisdom to discern the one from the other takes more than our lifetime to acquire.

“In a fine riff on the great central Christian text from Second Corinthians about faith, hope and charity, my father, Reihold Niebuhr, wrote: ‘Nothing worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing that is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing that we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love.’”

Submitted by the Social Justice Ministry

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee is at work contacting those folks in the congregation who offered to help with its work on the newsletter. An *ad hoc* committee consisting of Vandy Bradow, Carolyn King, Susan Lane, Dot Littleton, and Anne Pope has been planning ways to enhance our newsletter. Many of the questionnaire responses made good suggestions and we are in the process of implementing several of them. Thanks so much for your ideas!

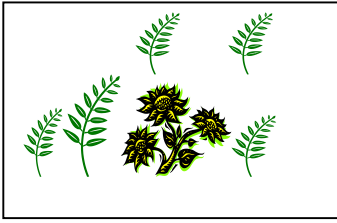


We send our prayers and condolences to Joan and John Little upon the death of John’s brother Buck

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 in the Narthex or in Pilgrim House.

Following are the names of those to be remembered in prayer: Jo Lemons and Nancy Keppel.

PROPERTY MINISTRY: **AN UPDATE ON THE GARDEN**



Mac Hulslander reports that work on the garden is progressing nicely. The Wade Avenue berm and boulders are in and many of the plantings are in place. We are grateful to the Hoffmann family for a very significant contribution toward the garden's completion. This is in addition to the gift of a pink dogwood and a "family heirloom" camellia both of which have been transplanted.

Ted Hoffmann remembers Arnold always cut camellias from this heirloom bush and gave them to "the ladies" on Sunday – a tradition Ted, Rosemary and Bruce would like to see continued!

Mac also wants to acknowledge the gift of a Deodora Cedar from Vandy Bradow and a Japanese stone lantern being donated by the AIDS Care Team members in memory of Bobbi Jo Bolling. The lantern will be dedicated on or near Bobbi Jo's birthday, March 8th (TBA).

For others of you who might be gardeners or have plants you are willing to contribute to the effort, a list of needed ones follows. It would be a great help with the transplanting if they could be dug up and brought to the church. Please let Mac know for planning and planting arrangements (833-7203):

Ground covers: moneywort/penny royal, lamium, dwarf mondo grass, moss

Ornamental grasses: carex, miscanthus, muhly grass

Ferns: holly fern, painted fern, ostrich, Christmas, Korean Rock, tassel

Shrubs: Indian hawthorn, rosemary, winter daphne, chindo viburnum, sasanqua camellia, Japanese yew (Podocarpus), Bird's nest spruce, cleyera

Perennials: hostas, astilbe, Siberian iris, hellebores (Lenten rose), variegated Solomon's Seal, Herman's Pride (Lamiastrum)

Annuals: Coleus, lobelia

Trees: "Little Gem" magnolia

OUR PEOPLE

Bill Lamb has been selected as the Social Worker of the Year by the NC Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Bill will receive this award at the annual Social Work Recognition Luncheon to be held in Raleigh at the McKimmon Center on March 12th. Appropriately enough, the annual luncheon is one established by Bill himself some 15 years ago. You can read more about the award and his nomination on the NASW website: <http://www.naswnc.org/>.

By the time this newsletter is delivered, **Jo Lemons'** new chair should also have been delivered. It is a real high-tech wonder that lifts, lowers, and turns on a dime. Congratulations and good luck to Jo!

Welcome back to **Carol and Jack Kepler** from their adventures in Belize, and Godspeed to **Sharda and Moni Sawhney** as they depart for a month (and two weddings) in India.

Congratulations to **Susan and Don Lane**, who just celebrated their 25th anniversary!

Youth Birthdays*

3/3/88 – Amanda Bowen

3/24/90 – Nicholas DeVito

4/11/89 – Austin Osborne-Newman

4/12/98 – Casey Riemann

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.*

ROSTER UPDATES

If you would like to drop a line to **Nancy Keppel** her address is:

1404 Woodside Terrace
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Email address change for:

Sam and Kirsten Gaither – skgait2@earthlink.net.

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

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April Newsletter Deadline is Monday, March 22nd.

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

Lenten Activities

Services:

We are hosting Good Shepherd UCC for supper and a Tenebrae Service with Communion on Thursday evening April 8 from 6:30 to 8pm. We will have a super of chicken-matzo ball soup and delicious bread and observe the ritual of a Passover meal as Jesus did with his disciples at the Last Supper. Finishing supper we will go to the sanctuary for worship. Please let us know by sign-up either at church or by calling the church office (787-6422).

Palm Sunday Service with Processional Celebration
April 4 at 10:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday Service with "Flower Cross"
April 11 at 10:30 a.m.

Faith Enhancement Opportunities

Sundays at 2 p.m. A study group at Pilgrim House Reading and Discussing: A Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren. February 29, March 7, 14, 21, 28 and April 4.

Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. in the Vaughan Fellowship Hall. Tai Chi for physical and spiritual well-being and growth. March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, and April 7

Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Hoffmann Room. Meditation and Prayer for Peace.
March 6, 13, 20, 27

Lenten Retreat – CUCC – Saturday, April 3,
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Theme: "Experiencing
Communion"
