

Christmas Activities

Here We Come A-Caroling . . .

Barbara Rice will lead young people and adults in Christmas Caroling this Sunday, December 14th. They will leave church at 1:00 pm and return around 3:00 pm. Bring a lunch and join with them!



Have You Ordered Your Poinsettias?

A reminder that the deadline for poinsettia orders is this Sunday, December 14th. Forms will be available in the bulletins or may be obtained from the church office.



Christmas Sock Tree

Have you ever had feet that were cold? Cold and wet? Too many people in our community know that miserable feeling too often. You can do something about it by bringing socks – any kind, any size – to put on our Christmas Sock Tree in the Fellowship Hall. These will be taken to Greensboro Urban Ministry in late December. Here is another way you can show your love and concern for those in need.

Advent and Christmas Schedule

Tree Lighting:

Friday, Dec. 12th at 6:00 pm

Join us as we sing carols and have cookies and hot chocolate on the front porch, and light our outdoor tree.

Special Choir Presentation: Sunday, Dec. 14 during worship

The choir will present sacred Christmas hymns and carols by John Rutter.

Blue Christmas Service: Wednesday, Dec. 17, 7:00 pm

Need a break from the piped in Christmas music and the elbows of too many shoppers frantically hunting a bargain? Wondering if there's a way to recover some of the quiet beauty of the season? Join us for our fourth annual Blue Christmas service on Wednesday December 17 at 7:00 pm. The music will be calm and inspiring, the words kept to a minimum, the setting peaceful. Come join us, and if you know of others who may also appreciate this special service, invite them to come along.

Christmas Eve Services: 5:00 and 11:00 pm

The 5:00 pm service will include the children's choir; special music will be presented at the 11:00 pm service.

Epiphany Celebration: Sunday, January 4

We will have a special fellowship time to talk about the gifts God has given our church. Later that day, Julie and Paul will have their Open House from 4-8 pm. (More about this on page 2.)



Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Worship Schedule

General Assembly: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Refreshments: 12:00 p.m.

Our Mission

As people of Congregational United Church of Christ, we seek to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, accepting God's call to be a true community of love, compassion, and nurture.

Visitors

Congregational United Church of Christ is a warm, welcoming congregation that is always happy to receive visitors. To help you feel as comfortable and at-home as possible when you visit us, we've put together some information on what the Congregational experience is like — how to get to the church, what to wear (which is pretty much anything you'd like), nursery and Sunday school hours, and more. For details, check out our Visitor Page at our website: www.congregationalucc.com/about/visitors.php.

Our Next Newsletter

Deadline: Tuesday, Dec. 16
Publication: Friday, Dec. 19

News and events can be sent to office@congregationalucc.com.

Can't wait for news? Check out the Congregational UCC web site at www.congregationalucc.com. It is up-to-date, relevant, interesting, lively, and available 24 hours.

Lectionary Readings

December 14, 2008

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:47-55
I Thess. 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 21, 2008

II Sam. 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:47-55 or Ps. 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38



Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**400 West Radiance Drive
Greensboro, NC 27403
Phone: 336-274-5378/274-0838
Fax: 336-370-0297
Web: www.congregationalucc.com**

Rev. Julie Peoples
Senior Pastor
julie@congregationalucc.com

Rev. William C. Smith
Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Paul Davis
Minister for Christian Education
paul@congregationalucc.com

Mr. Jimmy Buchanan
Choir Director
jrb soul@aol.com

Ms. Edna Olayiwoya
Director of Children's Music &
Bella a Cappella
olayiwe@gcsnc.com

Ms. Charlotte Evans
Congregational Nurse
opendoornc@aol.com
Drop-In Hours: 4th Sun. of the month,
10:00-11:00 am
Home Visits: Thursdays

Ms. Regina Hayes
Nursery Director
regi.hay@gmail.com

Ms. Judy Page
Office Manager
office@congregationalucc.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Monday thru Wednesday & Friday

- Ministries**
- Bible Study
 - Children & Adult Choir
 - Handbell Choir
 - Youth Programs
 - Women's Fellowship
 - Adult Fun Club

- Outreach Programs**
- Greensboro Urban Ministry
 - Mobile Meals
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - Potter's House
 - Higher Ground
 - and many more . . .

Congregational News is published by
Congregational United Church of Christ,
Greensboro, North Carolina

From the Pastor

Julie in Israel



Julie is away, traveling in Israel with a delegation of clergy from Greensboro. You can see some of her pictures and comments at this

website: sites.google.com/site/julieinIsraelsite. She has had difficulty getting internet access to be able to post messages and pictures, but we will use this site to share all of her materials when she comes back home Thursday. Keep checking the site for updates.



Pastors' Epiphany Open House

Come and join us this year for an Epiphany Open House! This will be on Sunday, January 4th, from 4:00 until 8:00 pm.

Due to the fact that Julie has been away for the first ten days of December, plus it is always such a busy time for all of you, we have decided to hold our open house the first Sunday of January instead. That way, we will be past the Christmas rush.

Epiphany is traditionally observed as the time when the three Wise Men found their way to the Bethlehem stable, and thus the good news of Christ's birth began to spread far and wide. We invite you to bring a finger food to share rather than gold, frankincense, and myrrh!



2008 Christmas Honor Card

This year's Honor Card by William Mangum is entitled "First Light" and will be on sale after church this Sunday in the Fellowship Hall. The cards are \$5.00 each and the money goes to the Greensboro Urban Ministry which serves the homeless, hungry and poor in our community. They make a nice Christmas card for the special people in your life.

—Libby Bowles



Christmas Post Office

The Jordan/Wisseman Class Post Office will be in operation through Sunday, December 21. Bring cards that you would normally send to local church members to the "Post Office" in the back of the Fellowship Hall. You can then deposit the money that you would pay for postage with any class member. And, be sure to check with the "Post Office" for cards that may be sent to you!



Keep in Your Prayers ...

Sue Blanton (friend of Charlie & Debra Hertlein), Lauren Brower, Evelyn Chamberlain, Bob Crews (Cathy Wheeler's father), Mark DeHaven, The Dollyhigh Family, Jessica Ellisor (Teresa Earle's niece), Irene Fenn, Emily Franks-North, Kaye Gardiner (Midge Rasey's daughter), Alice Gilley (mother of Marjorie Liles), The Guerra Family, Beth Haunton (Lorie Tyson's friend), Barbara Hollifield, The Lamberts, The Family of Hyatt Ford Nolan, The Rice Family, Virginia Stricklen, Ruthann Wenger, H. O. Williams

2009 Work Trip, Tents of Hope, Tai Chi & More



I have begun the planning for a summer work trip for 2009. I have two weeks in mind, either August 2-8 or 9-15. Guilford

County Schools believes the first day of school will be August 25, and the first day for teachers will be August 19. So, I am seeking from you two things: would you be interested in a trip to New Orleans, and would you prefer one week over the other.

—Paul Davis



Tents of Hope Presentation

On Wednesday, December 17th, at 6:00 pm, Barbara Rice will share with us her experience at the Tents of Hope event in Washington, DC. She will show some marvelous pictures of the tents as well as share information about the program.

Light refreshments will be provided. This presentation will precede our Blue Christmas service, which will begin at 7:00 pm.



Sunday School

There will be no children's Sunday School on December 28th.

Desperately Seeking: House Sitter

One house sitter for one house, one precious 70 lb. dog, and three loving cats.

Needed beginning Dec. 26th at noon until Dec. 30th at 10:00 am. Willing to pay \$200 for this four-night stay. Refrigerator will be well stocked, 32 inch LCD HD TV with lots of channels, free Roadrunner access, with laptop and wireless, convenient location on Holden Road in Greensboro.

If interested in making some easy money, contact Karen Ritter at 336-601-7231.



Tai Chi for Health!

January 6 – February 17
(Seven Tuesdays)

4:00 to 5:00 pm

Congregational UCC

This program is endorsed by the Arthritis Foundations of the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia, and is practiced around the world. Medical studies have shown that tai chi helps people reduce pain and improve strength, balance, and flexibility and generally improves health and quality of life. This form is short, easy, stable and effective. It can be done sitting down. Instructor Naomi Galbreath has studied tai chi in the U.S. and China, and is certified to teach this program.

"Tai Chi for Health" will also be taught at St Andrews Episcopal (on Friendly Avenue) at 6:00 pm, beginning January 6. Participants are welcome to come to that class for make-up or review.

Suggested donation \$10/class. Please come early to register.



The grocery bags delivered to Santa's Elves.

A Note from Santa

Hi Members & Friends of CUCC,

Just wanted to give you a quick status report from North Pole. We ended up being able to take on two more families due to last-minute donations and the amount of groceries that were collected at the church and dropped off here to me. The final number helped is seventeen families, representing fifty children. We have never before, in our ten-year history, been able to help this many folks in a single year.

I want to once again thank you for letting me bring this to the congregation – for promoting the project and for helping us involve everyone from the very young to the adults. I can't begin to explain how very close to my heart this project is and the great joy that it has brought to reach as many as we did, and the joy it will bring to them. My helper, Darci, had such a wonderful time with the kids Sunday. Their energy and enthusiasm were contagious. Thank you! —Santa



Some of our own Santa's Elves.

Christmas Fund

Gifts to the Christmas Fund provide pensions and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees and emergency assistance to families of clergy and lay employees. Assistance will be provided to approximately 1500 persons during 2009.

Please be prepared to give generously to this important fund during the Christmas Eve services. If you cannot attend one of these services, envelopes will be available in the church office throughout December.



CUCC Business

CUCC Food Donations to Greensboro Urban Ministry

11/19/08-12/10/08: 544 pounds

Volunteers

December 14

Lay Reader: Alice Franks
 Toddler Nursery: Krista & Tina Kohlphenson
 Coffee Hour: B. Guill / M. Shaw

December 21

Lay Reader: Robin Dorko
 Toddler Nursery: Tricia Sutter
 Coffee Hour: A. Buffington / F. Ditto

December Ushers

B. & M. Mackenzie, S. Hall, K. Schleunes

Financial Reports

| Weekly Income | 11/23/08 | 11/30/08 |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Pledged Offering | \$3,227.00 | \$4,041.00 |
| Unpledged Offering | 4,180.60 | 758.00 |
| Use of Church | 28.00 | 400.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 50.00 | --- |
| Pastor's Discr. Fund | 50.00 | --- |
| Total | \$7,535.60 | \$5,199.00 |

Budget Income/Expense Summary

| | Nov. | Year-to-Date |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Income | \$25,974.51 | \$299,286.07 |
| Expense | 26,641.23 | 284,544.02 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) | (\$666.72) | \$14,742.05 |

\$262,448

Planned Giving

This week the church received a monetary bequest from the estate of Clyde Rudd. Clyde was a fixture at our church, an active member for many years. He loved this church and he left our church a legacy. We will cherish his memory.

This past year our church put together a Planned Giving program, to help all of us think about what we will leave when we are gone – to our families, our friends, our church. We have forms that can help any of us plan for the future, and information concerning how we can help provide for the future of this church. Ken Sell and Kate Larson would be happy to speak with you about planned giving, or you can pick up a Planned Giving packet from the church office.

Clyde, like Clarence Pierce and Fran Johnson, Jimmy Washburn and Charles Smith, Ray and Iona Bray, Dick Pleasants, and others all made lasting gifts to our endowed funds. Our endowment investments are a vital resource for our church, and we invite you to consider ways you can add to these funds.



Next Board & Council Meeting Night

The Boards and Church Council will have their next regular meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2009, beginning at 6:45 pm with a time of prayer. Board meetings begin at 7:00, Council at 8:15.

2009 Annual Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 25, 2009.

CUCC Budget Hearing

The church's December 7th budget hearing and election of officers and board members went smoothly and was packed! It was the largest turnout in memory for such a meeting, and we appreciate your interest in our fellowship.

The proposed budget for 2009 is \$355,798.88, and we are seeking \$262,448 in pledges, both of which represent a 5% increase over 2008. Thus far we have received 92 pledges for 2009, for \$225,451 pledged. This is 86% of our goal. Last year we had 105 pledges. This we have 15 new pledges! Very exciting news indeed!

Pledge cards, as well as information and forms for electronic giving, are available in the Sanctuary, in the narthex or from the office.

Many thanks to Sankey Moore-Painter and Pam Aldridge for their hard work compiling our figures and crunching the numbers – and most importantly, for helping us dream.

Our new officers and board chairs for 2009 are as follows: Kate Larson, Moderator; Becky Fleischer, Deacons; Bill Smith, Board of Christian Service; Lynn Hamilton, Christian Education; and Randy Yardley, Board of Management. Thanks to all who have agreed to serve next year, and special thanks to those who are completing their terms.

To show us graphically where we stand with pledges and income, we have turned our usual column line into a picture. We are making good progress, so together let's pledge the 2009 budget and run this line off the page!

\$ 0

Meet Our New Organist, Choir Update and More



Bill Herndon, a native High Pointer, began formal piano training under Troy W. Lee, having first taught himself to play by ear.

He started organ study in the ninth grade with Henry B. Whipple. After graduating from High Point Central, Bill attended the University of Michigan's School of Music studying Organ Performance with Dr. Robert E. Glasgow. While at U-M, Herndon was Dean of the Student Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and Student Assistant to the Interim Curator of Organs.

Herndon has held positions at several area churches, most recently at Second Reformed UCC in Lexington. He is a member of the Greater Greensboro Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

In 1990, he began a campaign to restore High Point's then dilapidated train depot. That successful effort eventually led to a position with the NC Department of Transportation's Rail Division supervising NCDOT personnel at several area rail stations. Herndon also worked closely with municipalities across the state on station rehabilitation projects from Charlotte to Rocky Mount. In January 2005, the US Postal Service hired Herndon as



a Mail Processing Equipment maintainer for the Bulk Mail Center in Greensboro, NC.

In the early 1990's, Bill was a Director of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, a national citizen organization advocating balanced transportation policy. He also served in the rail advocacy organizations of Ohio and North Carolina. During the 1980's and 1990's he served on the High Point Chamber of Commerce's Transportation Committee. In 1985, he was one of the founders of the Triad Health Project and served as THP's President in the late 1980's.

Herndon enjoys restoring historic properties, including his current 15,000 sq. ft. fixer-upper special, a former furniture store in High Point's Old West End. He shares his space with six dogs and four cats.



Choir Update

The musicians of the church would like to extend a warm welcome to anyone who would be interested in singing, playing, or just coming in to see what we are all about.

The year has gone by so fast, and we are quickly approaching the Christmas Holiday. We will be presenting the music of Rutter this coming Sunday, December 14th, during the 11:00 am service. Please come and listen to our choir and handbell groups offer their music up to God.

Edna Olayiwola is the new Children's Choir and Bella a Capella director. She comes to us from Guilford County, and works for Guilford County Schools. A reminder that Children's handbells will meet the 2nd and 4th Sundays after church from 12:15 to 1:00 pm, and the Children's Choir will meet after church on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays from 12:15 to 1:00 pm. Please plan to come and join in the fun.

If you would like more information on any of the music programs at the church, please contact Jimmy Buchanan, our Director of Music.



Worship To-Go

A reminder that CD recordings of our worship services are available by calling the office.



Deck the Halls!

Many thanks to the following individuals for sharing their time and talent to decorate the Sanctuary, narthex and fellowship hall for the holidays: Teresa Earles, Bill Guill, Sharon Karnes, Paul Macy, Etta Mullikin, Milton Shaw. Their work is festive and inviting!





Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Congregational United Church of Christ
400 West Radiance Drive
Greensboro, NC 27403

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The newsletter is available on-line. If you like this option and PROMISE YOU WILL READ IT, we will stop mailing you the newsletter and you can save us some money and save the world some paper. We will send you an e-mail letting you know when the newsletter is available along with a link to take you to it directly.

To date, fifty-five households have requested to be removed.

Among Our Members

To my many friends at CUCC,

I want to thank each of you for your many, faithful prayers for me over the past year. I have adjusted to my hearing loss and the congestive heart failure is definitely on the mend. I hope to return to full time work in January. I have felt the healing power of your prayers and am so very thankful for you, my faith family.

Love,
Fran Ditto

Thank you to Sterling and Barbara Whitener who have once again donated the Christmas tree that we will display outside the church from their property at Whitener Mountain near Blowing Rock. We thank them for their kind generosity and trust of our amateur lumberjacks to cut and transport the tree.

E-Mail Address Correction for Karen Ritter:
kr Ritter@gmail.com

January Birthdays

- 1 Millie Muskovin
- 1 Tandy Brown
- 5 Bill Pressmann
- 7 Virginia Bright
- 7 Sadie Covington
- 8 Harold Ashworth
- 9 Marie Williams
- 10 Matina Kalconnis-Rueppell
- 11 Grace Barber
- 13 Mac Mackenzie
- 14 Susan Shroyer
- 16 William Scarborough
- 19 Jonathon Hertlein
- 19 Faith Pressman
- 20 Rick Bardolph
- 22 Alana Patterson
- 22 Katherine Williams
- 23 Jamie Anderson
- 26 Sankey Moore-Painter
- 27 Meredith Moore-Painter
- 29 Jon Patrick Nance