

Our Life Together

New Year's Resolutions?

Some of us feel the need to exercise more, eat less, read more and watch TV less. These are fine goals. How about your church life? Before the New Year gets beyond us, we came across what we think is a helpful resource (from our friends at United Church in Chapel Hill) any of us can use to evaluate our faith lives. Do you feel like something is missing? Or would you like to try a new challenge? We believe our call as Christians is to fully participate in our community, the Body of Christ. Here are five broad areas, that define our church life together: Worship, Connect, Learn, Serve, and Give.



After each heading we list activities within our church community, but you should also include your other own volunteer efforts and activities. The point is to look at your life, see if you take part in each of these areas, see if something is missing, and to offer you the chance to find balance.

Worship

Sunday Morning Service, Cancel Choir, Adult Handbells, Chancel Ringers, Bella a Capella, Youth Handbells, Children's Choir, Ush-

ers, Lay Readers, Prayer, Evening Worship Services Like Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday

Connect

Coffee Hour, Supper Study, All Church Retreat at Blowing Rock Conference Center, Women's Fellowship, Men's Prayer Breakfast, Men's Prayer Breakfast Retreat, Youth Group, Fun Club

Learn

Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, "This I Believe" Small Group, Book Group, Confirmation, Other Small Groups

Serve

Higher Ground, Meals at Potter's House, Work Trip, CROP Walk, Winter Walk for Aids, Dining With Friends, Bereavement Teams, Boards and Committees, Teaching Sunday School, Nursery Volunteers, Green Church Team, Blood Drive, Darfur Action, GUM Food Drives, Santa's Elves, Mobile Meals, Church Workdays

Give

Regular Giving and Pledging, Special Offerings, Electronic Giving, Planned Giving

So, we invite you to find something new, and to take the opportunity for a fresh and balanced start to your new year!



Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 25th at 9:00 am

All are asked to attend, as we will vote on the budget. Light refreshments and gift bags will be available.



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: Friday, Jan. 30
Publication: Wednesday, Feb. 4

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

January 25, 2009

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
I Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

February 1, 2009

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
I Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28



Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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julie@congregationalucc.com

Rev. William C. Smith
Pastor Emeritus

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

Mr. Jimmy Buchanan
Choir Director
jrbsoul@aol.com

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

Mr. Bill Herndon
Organist
rbill@triad.rr.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 . . .

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Greensboro, North Carolina

From the Pastor

Teachable Moments



By the time you read this President-Elect Obama will have officially become President Obama. Many of us will have watched at

least some of the proceedings on TV; a lucky, brave few among us will have actually attended in person. Some critical questions will have been answered: which designer gown did Michelle Obama choose? How big was the crowd? Which inaugural ball had the most Hollywood stars in attendance? We do seem to have our priorities.

I recall watching various inaugurations on TV as a child. Even when I was too young to completely comprehend what was happening and why it all mattered, I caught that sense that something **important** and **historical** was taking place.

Whether you tend to vote Republican or Democrat, favor red states, blue, or purple, you can hopefully agree this is a teachable moment, especially for our children and grandchildren. It is a time for us to help them make connections, such as the one between the legacy of the man we honored and remembered on Monday and the man sworn in as commander-in-chief on Tuesday. Connections such as the fact that the outgoing and incoming presidents may be miles apart in politics, temperament, style, and such, yet our nation insists on an orderly, respectful transition of power. Connections such as working for change in the way we do things as a nation and the fact that the freedom to do that work makes us very proud of our country. Connections such as, seeing all these important-looking, well-dressed people in DC, and understanding

that we all have a part to play, work to do.

And regardless of your own political stance, I trust you will join me in praying for our country and its leaders. Pray that they will be vigilantly open to God's guidance. Pray that this new sense of promise and hope will not be disappointed. Pray for the safety of our leaders and their families. Pray that we will all do our part to help our nation act on its deepest values, occupy a place of integrity on the world stage, and strive to live up to its highest ideals.

May we help our children and grandchildren know, as Emerson once said, that "what lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." It is truly a teachable moment. Let's make the most of it.

—Julie Peeples



Keep in Your Prayers ...

Sue Blanton (friend of Charlie & Debra Hertlein), Becky Borum, Lauren Brower, Evelyn Chamberlain, Sunny Covington, Bob Crews (Cathy Wheeler's father), The Dollyhigh Family, Jessica Ellisor (Teresa Earle's niece), Irene Fenn, Kaye Gardiner (Midge Rasey's daughter), The Guerra Family, Beth Haunton (Lorie Tyson's friend), Paul Huffines, The Lamberts, Virginia Stricklen, Ruthann Wenger, H. O. Williams

Supper Study, Book Group, This I Believe

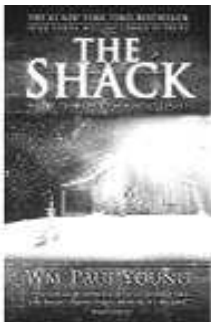
We will continue to meet at 6:00 pm on the first and third Wednesdays, except when noted. The cost for the meal remains \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. Reservations must be received by Tuesday noon, and can be made via e-mail or phone or by filling out your request on the pew pads in worship.

February 4: Update from Israel

Terry Moore-Painter and Julie Peeples will share pictures, stories, and impressions from their recent interfaith trip to Israel. Supper will be covered dish.

February 18: Update on the Economy

Bob Williams will lead us through some of the aspects of our changing economy.



Book Group

The next meeting of our Book Group will be on Sunday, February 1st. (Please note date change.) We will read *The Shack*, by William Young. Several people in our congregation have read this thought-provoking book, and I encourage them to join our regular participants for the conversation. We meet in the Parlor, around 12:30 pm. Bring a lunch.

This I Believe Series

We are beginning a new, multi-faceted program this winter, based on the NPR series, *This I Believe*. The radio series first aired in the '50's, hosted by Edward R. Murrow. In 2005, the series was brought back to life, and each Monday, public radio stations across the country air an original three-minute essay written and delivered by a vast array of contributors, from the famous to the unknown. With each segment, the author offers a personal account of what has come to matter in his or her life and why. Not an expounding of official dogma, but a description of the core values that guide people's lives. The goal is not to convince others to believe a certain way; rather it is "to encourage Americans to begin the much more difficult task of developing respect for and reaching deeper understanding of beliefs different from our own."

We will host our own *This I Believe* series in several ways in the hopes of involving as many in our congregation as possible. Our Supper Study this past week offered an introduction of the series, sharing a few essays from the radio program, and giving folks an initial "taste" of how to write one's own story. In addition, in the coming weeks, **all in the congregation will be invited to write** their own brief essay. Guidelines and helpful hints will be included in the next newsletter. During Lent, we will invite a willing participant each week to share their essay in worship. We will also publish some on the website and in the newsletter.

Lastly, there will be a **small group** which focuses on this as well. The group will meet for four

Thursday evenings, beginning February 5, at 7:00 pm. This group will be designed especially for those who are wrestling with their beliefs, who want to clarify their core values, rather than those who have it all figured out! (If there are those who would be interested in a daytime group as well, please let Julie know.)



We believe this will be a fun, stimulating, and rewarding endeavor, and we hope everyone will choose to participate, at whatever level will work for you. Not only can it be of great benefit to the individual to reflect upon their most basic beliefs, this can also be an enriching effort for our congregation, as we share our faith together, learn from one another, and come to a deeper appreciation of each one's journey.

Find more information on *This I Believe* at www.thisibelieve.org. There you can listen to or read many of the essays that have been heard on NPR.



Missed a Worship Service?

We have CD recordings available for our worship services. If you would like one, please contact the office. If you are not able to come to worship regularly, this is a fine way to keep in touch.

Giving Statements, 2009 Stewardship Report & More

2008 Giving Statements are now available in the Fellowship Hall. Please help us save postage and pick them up as soon as possible. Offering Envelopes are also available for pick up. Postage costs for mailing those has led us to decide we will mail them only upon request. As mentioned earlier, we have plenty of boxes of offering envelopes, so if you don't find a box with your name on it, please ask. Many members have requested that because they enjoy on-line billpay, electronic fund transfer or annual payments they prefer not to receive the offering envelopes. For those who give weekly, the Financial Secretary thanks you for using them.

Higher Ground

Our next opportunity to serve is Tuesday, January 27th. Food donations and volunteers are welcome. Please have food at the church by 10:45 am on that Tuesday, or you may bring your donation directly to Higher Ground by 11:45 am. Please join us!



2009 Stewardship Report

Thus far we have received ninety-nine pledges, including seventeen new pledges, representing a total figure of \$234,783. We are closing in on what we feel we need to support our spending in 2009. If you have not yet been in touch with Pam Aldridge, we will welcome your pledge for 2009. In 2008, our income from pledges and regular givers was \$230,859.50.

We deeply appreciate your confidence in our church and its ministry. 2008 was a difficult year financially for many and 2009 seems to be uncertain. What we hope as a church is that each person will give as they are able, in response to the love God shows us. By God's grace, your generosity, and wise and careful planning, we ended the year in good financial condition. How good? You will need to come to our Annual Meeting Sunday to find out.



Keep It Coming!

Last week's total for Greensboro Urban Ministry was 47 pounds. That's five grocery bags full! Keep it coming and I'll do the rest.

Thanks for your great response,
Katherine Rowe

In Case Of Bad Weather

If by some chance we happen to get snow or ice this winter, our church's policy is that we will not cancel Sunday morning worship. **We urge everyone to use caution and sound judgment** in deciding whether or not to attend. Some of us live close by, and we promise to pray on behalf of all! This is simpler than everyone staying glued to television announcements for closings. For weekday activities, we will have a recorded message on the church answering machine, and also notices on the website, concerning cancellations, and will otherwise get the word out as best as is humanly possible.



The Devil Came on Horseback

The church has a copy of the DVD, *The Devil Came on Horseback*, which is a documentary based on the experience of former U.S. Marine Captain Brian Steidle, who served in Sudan as an official military observer. Barbara Rice got the film during the Tents of Hope conference in November. The film has won several film festival awards. We will place the DVD in the Library book cart in Fellowship Hall.

CUCC Business

Volunteers

January 25

Lay Reader: Midge Rasey
Toddler Nursery: Kirsten Joseph & Michelle Kennedy
Coffee Hour: TBA

January Ushers

Joann Myrick, Sticky Burch, Clyde Humphrey, Mike Dorko

February 1

Lay Reader: TBA
Toddler Nursery: Sharon Montanus
Coffee Hour: Kate Larson and Ish Whitfield

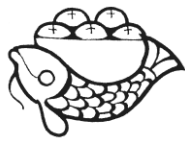
February Ushers

Ed Driver, Charles Hertlein, Frank Kuester, Milton Shaw

Financial Report

Weekly Income	1/04/09	1/11/09
Pledged Offering	\$5,398.00	\$2,341.00
Unpledged Offering	764.25	297.10
Initial Offering	29.00	9.00
Use of Church	45.00	525.00
Christmas Fund	5.00	---
Total	\$6,241.25	\$3,172.10

Enrichment Classes, Appreciation



The Servant Leadership School of Greensboro

The Servant Leadership School of Greensboro invites students to a deeper relationship with God and with others in community, while exploring both an inward journey of personal transformation and an outward journey of discerning their own particular "call" and giving expression to some form of life-giving service to the world.

The catalog of their Winter/Spring 2009 offerings is online at www.servantleadergreensboro.com. A copy is also posted on the CUCC bulletin board.



Speechcraft

A comprehensive four-week series to improve speaking, listening, and leadership skills.

Presented by Friendly Toastmasters

Monday evenings:
February 2 – 23, 2009

Pre-registration/orientation:
January 26, 2009

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Friendly Avenue Church of Christ
5101 West Friendly Avenue
Greensboro



\$20.00
Limited Scholarships
Available
Space is Limited

You will...

- Learn to communicate more effectively.
- Become a better listener.

- Improve your presentation skills.
- Increase your leadership potential.
- Increase your self-confidence.

To register or for additional information, please contact: Beth Holder, Vice President Public Relations, 336-856-9610 or bholder99@msn.com.



Note of Appreciation

Dear CUCC,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your generous gift of \$450 to Elon Homes and Schools for Children. This supportive, caring gesture on the part of your congregation will have an immediate, positive impact on the lives of the children we serve.

Support such as this allows us to carry our mission with the children and their families with the hopes of reuniting them whenever possible. Those of us who work in the field of ministry and human services know that our society has changed – and continues to change in dramatic and often troubling ways. Children are affected by concerns and problems we never thought about, much less faced. I firmly believe that only through constant commitment and interpretation of the Christian message are we going to have a direct impact on the lives of our children and young people. We are truly grateful for your participation in our ministry to help these young people grow to lead productive, more meaningful lives.

For the children,
Rev. Dr. Frederick Grosse
President

Prayer for The Children of Gaza & The Children of Israel

At a gathering here at Congregational on January 15th, participants in the Interfaith Mission to Israel all agreed to share this prayer with their congregations during worship. Terry Moore-Painter shared it in worship here on Sunday, January 18th.

Images of destruction and death haunt us daily. We mourn the loss of life; any life, particularly the life of innocents.

In the future, it is the children of Gaza and of Israel who will live together and hopefully live in peace.

We offer this special prayer, created by Rabbi Levi Kelman, adapted by Rabbi Eli Havivi, for the children of Gaza and the children of Israel.

Lord, who is the creator of all children, hear our prayer. Turn your face to these, the children of Gaza and the children of Israel, that they may know your blessings and your shelter, that they may know light and warmth, where now there is blackness and smoke.

Shield them. Spare them. Heal them. Let them stand in safety.

We ask your blessings for the children of Gaza and the children of Israel who are the grandchildren of our ancestor Abraham.

For the children of Gaza, the children of our kinsman, Ishmael, remember that you heard his cry and sent your angel to comfort him and his mother Hagar.

For the children of Isaac and Jacob, remember your mercies toward Isaac and your blessings toward Jacob.

God, who gives life, who is known by many names, who knows the value and the fragility of every life, send these children your angels to guide and protect them.

Bless these children, and keep them from harm.

Turn Your face toward them and grant them peace.

Amen.



Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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Among Our Members

Dear Congregational friends,

I want to thank all of those who recently sent Mom a card when she entered assisted living. I think all the cards helped her get over the initial adjustment to her new surroundings. It was difficult at first, but by Christmas time, she was doing great. (See picture below.) In



fact, she was probably as happy and content as I have seen her in several years.

I also wanted you to know how blessed Mom and I feel to have such caring friends.

May God bless each of you.

—Paul Macy

Thank you, thank you, thank you for over 320 pairs of socks in all sizes and all kinds. These have been taken to Urban Ministry to help folks have warm feet these cold winter days. Once again you have shown your concern and your compassion by decorating our Christmas tree with socks.

—Dot Ballinger

February Birthdays

- 3 Irwin Smallwood
- 4 Lib Basham
- 5 Martha Hall
- 6 Kimberly Simpson
- 8 Barbara Rice
- 9 Sharon Karnes
- 9 Walter Patten
- 9 Elizabeth Rowe
- 11 Joann Myrick
- 13 Bill Powell
- 16 Kay Swofford
- 18 Paul Macy
- 19 Bill Guill
- 21 Alexandra Simpson
- 22 David Ridge
- 23 JoAnne Simpson
- 23 Ishmael Whitfield
- 23 C. P. Gause
- 24 Lynn Hamilton
- 26 Reid Matthews
- 27 Ann Nelson
- 28 Nancy Prairie
- 29 Lou Boyles
- 29 Kathy Rice