



Greensboro Gleanings

December 2017

From the pastor's desk ...

The new pastor is here!

Patti and I arrived in Greensboro full of excitement, anticipation and gratitude. Thanksgiving was a most appropriate season for us to move to Greensboro and to begin serving as pastor of Greensboro United Church of Christ. We are most grateful for those you of who worked so diligently to make the parsonage ready for our arrival. You did a wonderful job. For the many ways you have made us feel welcomed into this community and this church, we thank you.

As I listen to stories about the important work of reflection and self-examination that the congregation has done during the interim time, I am grateful for the ministry of Rev. Rona Kinsley. Her time here in Greensboro will be a benefit to our congregation for many years to come.

We had our first small group meeting yesterday. We will have two more before this week is finished and there are more opportunities in the following week. The purpose of these meetings is to give me an opportunity to get to know you. If you have not signed up for one already, I hope you will do so in the fellowship hall this Sunday. I am grateful for your willingness to help get to know you in these small group settings.

Already, we have celebrated the first Sunday of Advent. We are making our way to Bethlehem. In our lives, we are making room for the one for whom there was no room on that long-ago night. As the last few weeks have clearly demonstrated, we live busy and crowded lives. Making room is necessary work. We need to make room, space, time and silence. There is a child on the way. God is coming to us, Emmanuel.

Christmas will be here before you know it. While I don't know all that you have to do to get ready for that day, I hope that you are getting ready to experience again the wonder of God's love for you and presence with you.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to experience that love and that presence with you.

Joy & peace,

Ed

THANK YOU



December Ushers and Greeters

- Dec. 3 — Shelly Jungwirth & John Howard
- Dec. 10 — Beth LeCours & Cathy Pollard
- Dec. 17 — Patti & Victoria Foster
- Dec. 24 — Cilla Bonney-Smith & Sabra Jones McAteer
- Dec. 31 — Patty & Alden Launer



December Coffee Hour Hosts

- Dec. 3 — Lucy Keefe
- Dec. 10 — Alden & Patty Launer
- Dec. 17 — BJ & Hal Gray
- Dec. 24 — Eleanor Guare
- Dec. 31 — Ken & Janney Johnston

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December 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Sundays 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship Service	10-11am Mondays & Wednesdays Growing Stronger Fellowship Hall	Tuesdays 12pm Global Campus 3:30pm Pilates			1	2 12 noon Ladies Christmas Luncheon
3	4	5	6 4:30pm Pleasants Fund Committee Church Library	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 4:00pm Deacons Meet Church Library	14	15 Time TBA GAAR—Marla Christmas Sing-A-Long Sanct./FH	16
17 Christmas Fund Offering will be Received	18	19	20 7:00pm @ Church on the Common— Joint Service Blue Christmas	21	22	23
24 5:00pm CHRISTMAS EVE Service Discretionary Fund Offering	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28	29 6-8:00pm Bakers set up	30 1:00pm Baker Birthday Fellowship Hall
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY					

DAILY REFLECTIONS FOR ADVENT

In lieu of an Advent book study group, we invite you to read Celebrating Abundance by Walter Brueggemann. This book of daily devotionals will unite us in quiet prayer and reflection.

The book is available from these sources: Christianbook.com \$8.29 ships 12/1/2017; and Amazon.com , Kindle version only \$8.32 (Paperback temporarily out of stock). 3 paperback copies will be available for loan by or around December 3, 2017.

Note: The book is **not** available through The Galaxy Bookstore.

About the book (back cover copy):

"Advent is not the kind of 'preparation' that involves shopping and parties and cards. Such illusions of abundance disguise the true cravings of our weary souls. Advent is preparation for the demands of newness that will break the tired patterns of fear in our lives." (from The First Sunday of Advent)

This powerful devotional by best-selling author Walter Brueggemann includes daily reflections on the Scriptures and stories of Advent in order to invite us to see beyond the world's faux extravagance and realize the true feast laid out before us. Training our eyes to see through the rough stable, the adolescent mother, and the anxious escape to Egypt, we can see in that poverty and powerlessness, the wonder of God's abundant life and grace coming down to dwell among us. Twelve prayers are also included for the twelve days of the Christmas season. (from Celebrating Abundance)

PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Our pastor is provided with funds that he can discretely disburse to people in need. For example, the funds pay heating and electric bills, rent, food, gasoline, etc. In 2017 \$4,676.00 has been disbursed so far. As you can see, the need is great. The funds come from a collection taken at our Christmas Eve service. For those of you who are unable to attend that service, the church would accept donations at any time. Just mail a check to PO Box 176, Greensboro, written to GUCC with "discretionary fund" written on the memo line. It would be gratefully received. Thank you.

The Trustees

MILESTONES

Happy DECEMBER Birthday to: Tom Collier, Victoria Foster, Sherral Lumsden, Alec Larrabee, Lindsay Wheeler, Stephanie Whitten, Nathaniel Thompson, Joanna Beresford and Jack Gregory Durbin. And a **Happy Anniversary** to Tom & Tracy Collier, Janney & Ken Johnston, and Lily & Charley McAteer.

Is your birthday listed this month when it shouldn't be? Have we missed you in our celebrations? Contact the church office and let us know if your birthday is listed incorrectly or has been missed.



THE MUSIC CORNER

One of my most cherished musical possessions is my Grandfather's 1930 copy of the *Messiah* that he used for 40 years as a member of the tenor section of the Bethany United Church choir in Montpelier. He used to sing all the choruses by heart and teach them to me when I was a child and instilled in me the love for Advent and Christmas music. During this "choral season" we are delighted to continue our mission to *Serve God Through Music* with these Advent and Christmas offerings.

12/5 – Joseph Martin is a contemporary sacred music composer and we begin this Advent season with his anthem *Waiting for a King*. This moving anthem of anticipation features Hal and Mike Coffey as soloists and Gina playing a lovely recorder obligato throughout the piece. The text begins with "Waiting for a King; when will he come? Waiting for a King; God's Holy One."

12/10 – *They that Wait Upon the Lord* is written in a free, smooth musical style featuring a baritone soloist and multiple key changes. John Purifoy is the composer and the text is based on Isaiah 40:1-2, 11-31. You may recognize the verse from the opening of the *Messiah*: "Comfort ye, my people, speak tenderly, proclaiming that all warfare is done. Pardon has come from the hand of the Lord, says our God." The piano accompaniment will be soft, expressive with long legato musical phrases.

12/17– This Advent Sunday we bring you the upbeat and lively anthem *Hodie, Veni, Christe (Come, This Day, O Christ)*. Written in a crisp 6/8 rhythm, the composer Carl J. Nygard Jr. asks us to interpret this piece in a neo-baroque style, all while proclaiming: "To all of good cheer, The Savior is near sing *Hodie, hodie, Veni Christe!*"

12/24, 10 a.m. service – There will be no choir this morning, but a lot of music still. Join us!

12/24, 5 p.m. Service– When you enter the sanctuary on this very holy evening you will be greeted by our early music group (recorders, gamba, harpsichord) performing G. F. Handel's *Trio Sonata* and music of Corbett, and these pieces will set the scene for some very special music. Cara Hill will solo with the choir with the opening introit. Special music will include an ethereal *Alleluia* by Dr. Hayes (arr. Sonia Dunbar) that will include 3 voices, 3 recorders and harpsichord. Our featured anthem, *Christmas Gift* by contemporary artists Mary MacDonald and Mike Tipton, is a relaxed, emotional lullaby to proclaim the Holy birth. The text " Hope of man, the Holy Child; born so very meek and mild, came so humbly in a stall, 'twas a gift for all."



Happy Holidays to all!
Hal

GUCC MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to love as Jesus loved, caring for others and joyfully serving God, our community, and the world.

NEWS FROM
THE GREENSBORO UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION
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Upcoming Lectionary Readings

- Dec. 3** ~Isaiah 64:71-9 ~ Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 ~1 Corinthians 1:3-9 ~Mark 13:24-37
- Dec. 10** ~Isaiah 40:1-11 ~Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 ~ 2 Peter 3:8-15a ~Mark 1:1-8
- Dec. 17** ~Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 ~Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55 ~1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 ~John 1:6-8, 19-28
- Dec. 24** ~2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 ~Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 ~ Romans 16:25-27 ~Luke 1:26-38
- Dec. 31** ~Isaiah 61:10-62:3 ~Psalm 148 ~Galatians 4:4-7 ~Luke2:22-40

FROM RONA

Dear Friends at the Greensboro UCC,

I felt deeply honored and touched by the farewell you gave to me last Sunday. The delicious meal, the prayer, the kind words, the sermon title banners, the photo album, the cards, the poem, the blessing rocks, the song, the gorgeous flowers, the balloons , and the lovely painting of the church — it was all very special.

I really enjoyed getting to know you and the Greensboro community. You worked very hard, in our two years together, to be ready for a new pastor, and now that exciting time has come. You will be in my thoughts, my prayers, and my heart.

“God be with you till we meet again.”

Rona