



# PeacePress

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST [www.peaceucc.com](http://www.peaceucc.com)

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Volume 31, Issue 12

A Global Mission Church

December, 2018

The mission of Peace United Church of Christ is to reach our community for Christ, develop disciples, and empower all people for ministry.

*From the staff of Peace Church*



*Merry Christmas*

# Pastor's Perspective

## Advent

*A Season of Hope & Expectation*

The holiday season is here. For Christians this is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Below I have shared a historical description of the seasons of Advent and Christmas from the *United Church of Christ Book of Worship*.

Advent means “arrival,” and it is the season of *anticipation* and *preparation* that precedes Christmas in the churches in the West. It was first identified in the fourth century by the Roman Catholic Bishop Hilary of Poitiers who indicated that it was initially observed for a three week period in Gaul, France. In some instances the season was related not to Christmas but to the older Eastern feast of Christ’s birth, Epiphany. In the Middle Ages, the Western church gradually reduced the period from an eighth-century pattern of six weeks to four weeks.

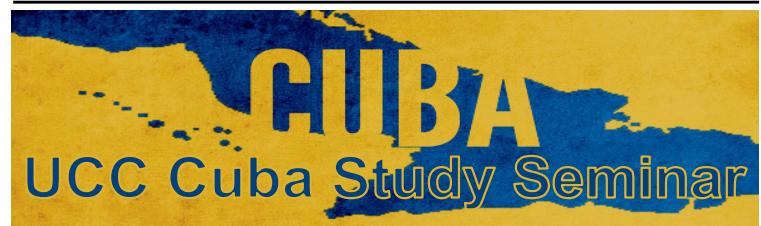
Now the first Sunday in Advent is the fourth Sunday before December 25<sup>th</sup>. The focus of the season includes not only preparation for the anniversary of Christ’s birth but also the anticipation of Christ’s return at the close of history. The early festal nature of the season has been rediscovered in this generation. Consequently, the penitential (confession for sin) emphasis no longer dominates. The seasonal color, purple, announces Christ’s royalty. In some traditions blue is used, jointly symbolizing royalty and hope.

Although the exact date of Jesus’ birth is not known, Christmas, the festival day of the birth of Jesus Christ, falls on December 25<sup>th</sup> in the church in the West. This date in the ancient Roman calendar was observed as a winter solstice holiday associated with non-Christian rituals of light. By the year A.D. 354, the church in the West had transformed the day into the annual festival of the one born to be the Light of the World. White, the color of the Christmas season, is appropriately used from Christmas Eve through at least the first Sunday in epiphany (January 6<sup>th</sup>).

In our historic moment, the birth of Christ points to a cosmic event of hope. The Jews of the first century awaited their Davidic king to rescue them from the pain, violence, and despair of the Roman Empire. For Christians today this holy birth is embraced as the moment when our "king" came down to rescue us from the struggles and despair of our time.

Thus, with great hopes, we await the advent of our Lord...

~ Pastor Tom



## UCC CUBA STUDY SEMINAR 2019 READY TO GO!!

The annual *United Church of Christ Cuba Study Seminar* is ready to depart. Beginning on Friday, February 1st through Friday, February 15th, fourteen UCC members will travel through the island of Cuba on a cultural immersion trip.

Beginning in the capital city of Havana for a four day stay, the group will then travel by bus across the entirety of the island with stops in Matanzas, Santa Clara, and Camaguey, all concluding with a four day stay in Santiago with Revs. Elmer and Gisela Lavastida.

This years' participants are coming from UCC churches in St. Louis, Missouri; Seattle, Washington; Pleasant Hill, Tennessee; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Ages range from 18 to 85 years old.

The trip is sponsored by the Cuban Council of Churches and the Cuban Institute for Friendship With the Peoples (ICAP). Since 1980, this trip has sought to build relationships with the people and churches of Cuba, while learning about its history, health care system, political system, education system, and various cultural traditions. This will be Pastor Tom's fourth year as lead organizer for this trip.

Please note also that our "Mission of the Month" for January will be the Lavastida Christian Center in Santiago. Funds raised during January will be delivered to the Lavastida Center by Pastor Tom when he is down there on his trip.



December — and it's time for our Advent and Christmas music (not that we haven't been hearing it all around us

for quite a while already!). Now is our opportunity for all of us in the church to share together in the message and beauty of our Christmas songs.

Our Hymn of the Month for December is page 132, *When God Is a Child* by Brian Wren and Joan Collier Fogg. This hymn will be introduced to the congregation on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the first Sunday of Advent, by our youth and children. They began learning it in November, and I certainly want to thank Ted and several parents for their assistance in helping sing and teach the song. Please read the words and sing with us!

On December 16<sup>th</sup> our choir will lead our musical worship with the cantata, *Joyful and Triumphant* subtitled *A Worldwide Celebration* created by Claire Cloninger and Lowell Alexander with arrangements by Camp Kirkland. The songs emphasize that Jesus came for everyone! We celebrate His birth all around the world. This cantata has a medley of familiar carols in the middle of it. You will be invited to sing with us and feel His wonderful presence all around us.



**And... December is a five Sunday month.** On December 30<sup>th</sup> our hymn sing will be a carol sing. If you have a favorite that we haven't sung or one you want to sing again, be ready to suggest it during worship that morning.

Please enjoy a blessed, Christ filled Christmas and New Year!



## Schedule of Advent Events

**First Sunday of Advent (December 2nd)** our Heifer International Living Gift Market officially opened and will remain open throughout the month of December. (More information can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.) We lit the candle of **HOPE**.

**Second Sunday of Advent (December 9th)** we will light the candle of **PEACE**. The Heifer Living Gift Market continues, and GUM Honor Cards are available.

**Third Sunday of Advent (December 16th)** we will continue offering Heifer Project "gift animals" for purchase, and this will be the last day to purchase GUM Honor Cards. We will light the candle of **LOVE**.

**Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 23th)** We will light the candle of **JOY** in our regular morning worship service. The Heifer Living Gift Market continues through December 30.



**December 24th, Christmas Eve** worship service will begin at **6:00 p.m.** We will light all the candles of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy with a special lighting of the **CHRIST CANDLE**. All members and friends of Peace Church are invited to be a part of this special, candlelight service. Join us!!



Peace United Church of Christ  
**MISSION OF THE MONTH**

**HEIFER INTERNATIONAL  
 LIVING GIFT MARKET**

**Make the Holidays More Meaningful!**

Looking for a way to give a gift this Christmas that is thoughtful and meaningful to those on your list who seem to have it all? Giving an animal to Heifer

 International in honor of friends or family is like giving someone a small business, providing wool, milk, eggs, and more. Animal donations can provide families a hand up, increasing access to medicine, school, food and a sustainable livelihood. Families who receive your gift become donors as they pass on the offspring of their animal to other families in their community. This allows them to help others as you have helped them. In some of the world's most impoverished countries, obtaining basic necessities like clean water and shelter is a daily struggle. Help families improve their lives with gifts that improve sanitation, health, and access to clean water. Your gift will provide support for women's groups, training in gender equality and the means to send girls to school. Help empower women around the world to reach their full potential. Send an honor card to let your family and friends know about the special gift you gave in their name. When you give a Heifer gift, you are making a lasting difference.

Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent, December 2, Heifer honor cards may be purchased in the Narthex. Gifts to Heifer International will be accepted through December 30.



Ted Dawson, Artist

2018

**THE CHRISTMAS FUND**  
 for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund

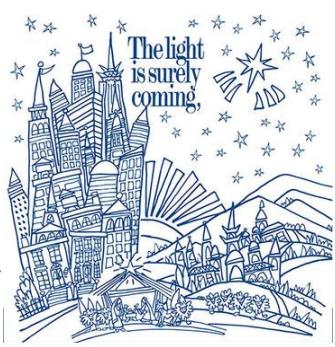
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Pension Boards  
 United Church of Christ, Inc.  
 WHERE FAITH AND FINANCE INTERSECT

[www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org)

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors.

*It wasn't easy picking up the telephone to share with you my present situation. In fact, it was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life although it reminded me that grace still happens. Sometimes we as clergy persons lose sight of God's grace when the negative stuff comes into our lives."*



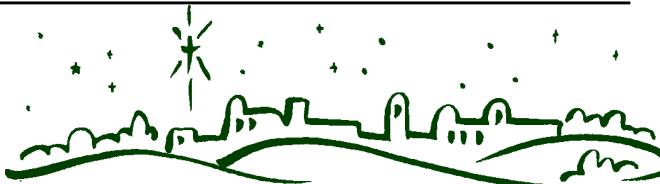
*...thanks so much for sharing your time and ministry with me. Your most gracious gift is appreciated more than words can say as I continue to live in the 'meantime.'"*

These eloquent words are from a pastor who is the recipient of the caring and concern of those who contribute to the Christmas Fund Offering.

You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors like the one above, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to lower-income retirees.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.



# Women's Fellowship News



The purpose of the Women's Fellowship is to unite all the women of the congregation in Christian fellowship. Our

Constitution states that every

woman by virtue of her membership in the congregation is invited to become a member. Active membership is defined as "Any woman who takes part in the work of this Women's Fellowship through prayer and service, attendance at meetings, or financial support of the challenge of the Women's Fellowship." We invite you to join us in any way that is possible for you.

Our regular meetings are held September through June on the first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am in the parlor. The Women's Fellowship's 2018-2019 year began with our first meeting in September. Thankfully, Doris Yeatess will continue to be our Bible Study leader and our series for this year is entitled "God's Promise: I Am With You". Doris's program is followed by a business meeting to take care of decisions regarding mission work, our treasurer's report and decisions about how we can best use any funds collected, and scheduling of any ongoing commitments such as Narthex refreshments on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month. Some of our ongoing responsibilities are a bud vase when a child is born into our congregation, decorating the church for the Advent Season including a Chrismon tree, the annual Mother-Daughter-Friend Banquet, Church Beautification, and a Kitchen Committee which oversees stocking of the pantry and regular clean-up. Our ladies are called upon regularly for bereavement receptions and social receptions of all sorts.

One of this year's major projects was to paint all exterior doors of the church. This project has been completed with the exception of the Narthex doors which will undergo a transformation soon and will be painted after that is completed. The top panel of each door will be removed and replaced with glass, allowing tremendous light to fill our Narthex. When some of the donated money was left over after the painting, we voted to apply it to this project.

We are excited about the work to be done in the coming months. Please come along with us; we promise lots of spiritual growth, friendships, hard work and a generous amount of just plain fun!

## UPDATE FROM HANDS-ON

Hands-On continued its highly productive year with an outstanding performance in November. With 14 attending, we were able to produce and deliver the following:

Hospice	15
Wesley Long	15
Cone Pediatrics	14
Cone Palliative Care	13
Women's Hospital	13
Total	70



Let us not forget our non-attending members who contribute by cutting, machine sewing, hand sewing, turning/pressing, and delivering. We couldn't do it without you!



## TINY HOUSES FUNDRAISER



Proceeds from the benefit concert by The Do Dah Men and the raffle on October 26 in the amount of \$875 were presented to Tiny Houses Greensboro to assist in their goal of providing safe, affordable housing to those experiencing homelessness in Greensboro. Thank you to all who made this event possible through your gifts of time and money.

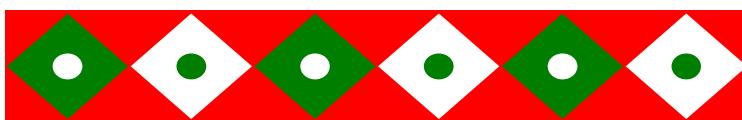


# NEWS & Notes

## JRVC Announces 2019 Work Camp Schedule

Johns River Valley Camp offers meaningful and enjoyable Mission Camp opportunities for youth in our Southern Conference churches. Surrounded by the Southern Appalachian Mountains, JRVC delivers ministry in a creative rural tension of beauty and poverty.

The following weeks have been set aside as Mission Camp weeks for 2019: June 9-15, June 23 -29, July 7-13 and July 21-27. Contact JRVC today at [phardy.jrvc@gmail.com](mailto:phardy.jrvc@gmail.com) to begin planning a trip.



## Free Wills Workshop To Be Offered

On Sunday, January 27th, Peace Church member **Amy Williams** will be offering a workshop for anyone who would like to have a personal will created for their end-of-life concerns. Amy will not only offer professional legal advice regarding wills, but she will help participants create their own will so that they have it "in hand" upon completion of the workshop. This free workshop will be held in the Fellowship Hall following worship. Interested person are asked to sign-up in the Narthex and bring a bag lunch.

Amy Williams graduated from Elon University School of Law and practices law in Greensboro.

Pictured at right: **David & Mary Ann Murray** recently enjoyed a weekend in the western North Carolina Mountains. They are pictured here in Black Mountain, NC in a little rocking chair built for two!



Congratulations to **Ian Myers** for a great senior year on the Grimsley Whirlies football team! Pictures are from senior night with his mom and dad, **Eddie & Stephanie Myers**. Ian is the grandson of **Una Lee Myers**.



# Winter Youth Retreat

The Planning Team for the UCC Winter Youth Retreat have offered a "save the date" press release. The annual retreat will be held on January 18-21, 2019, at the Blowing Rock Conference Center, focused around the theme: *Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly*. Guest speaker is Robyn Henderson Espinoza (Ph.D.). Music will be provided by Gravel and Silk. This retreat is for youth ages 14-18 years of age. Those who are interested can speak to Pastor Tom or check out the website at [www.uccwinteryouthretreat.org](http://www.uccwinteryouthretreat.org).

## Wider Church UCC News

The United Church of Christ will hold its 32nd General Synod national meeting from June 21-25, 2019 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This is the bi-annual gathering of the entire United Church of Christ, its 39 Conferences, various instrumentalities, and representatives from both local congregations and global ministries.

The theme for the 32nd General Synod is based on Matthew 5:16, "In the Same Way Let Your Light Shine Before Others", and will feature the best UCC women preachers in the denomination including Rev. Kaji Spellman Dousa, Rev. Traci Devon Blackmon, Rev. Sharon Lee Mei-Shem MacArthur, and Rev. Dr. Amy Butler.

For more information about General Synod 32 please go to [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org). This is an event not to be missed.

**Please Note:** Pastor Tom will be having an information table in the display center for the *UCC Cuba Study Seminar* and would welcome some company.



## Peace Church Recipe Corner

### CASHEW PEA SALAD

(Contributed by Ellen Mason)



3/4 cup vegetable oil  
 1/4 cup cider or red wine vinegar  
 1 garlic clove, minced  
 2 to 3 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon salt  
 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice  
 1/4 teaspoon pepper  
 1/4 teaspoon sugar  
 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas, thawed  
 2 celery ribs, thinly sliced  
 1/2 cup sour cream  
 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled  
 3/4 cup chopped cashews  
 Lettuce leaves and tomato wedges, optional

For dressing, combine the first nine ingredients in a small bowl; mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

In a large bowl, combine peas, celery and onions. Combine sour cream and 2 tablespoons dressing (refrigerate remaining dressing); mix well. Fold into the pea mixture. Just before serving, stir in bacon and cashews. If desired, serve on lettuce with a tomato garnish.

## SHERRI VESTAL ON MEDICAL LEAVE



Sherri Vestal will be having her other knee replacement surgery on Monday, December 31st (get it in 2018!). Some wonderful volunteers will be manning the office during her absence. **PLEASE NOTE:** Please get bulletin information to the office no later than **Wednesday** each week (preferably by email). As with the previous knee surgery, Sherri will be working from home on bulletins, newsletter, and whatever can possibly be done remotely and Elisabeth Penry will be printing bulletins, checks, etc. each week for us.



We rejoice in celebration of the baptism of **Haley Lambe Williams**, daughter of Amy Williams, sister of Evie Williams, and granddaughter of Mike and Holly Williams. Haley baptized on Sunday November 11th.



Dear Peace Church,

On behalf of my family I would like to say thank you for your abundant generosity. During Jimmy's hospital stay we received several cards with encouraging words. Many of you have been, and continue to, pray for us. Please know your thoughtfulness has been well received and your prayers have truly kept us all going.

I would also like to thank you for your monetary support from the Love Fund. It has meant much to us.

I will work part time only through the end of 2018 while Jimmy will continue therapy for a while longer. Our kids have returned to school and we are doing our best to go back to normal life. It is the faithfulness of God's children and the openness of the hearts of those around us that has made it possible.

I wish for each of you to feel the abundant blessings that have been bestowed on myself and my family these past few months.

In Christ,

Misty, Meghan, Corinne, Ramsey, and Jimmy Nelson

## New Arrivals Thanksgiving Dinner

On Wednesday, November 21st the New Arrivals Institute had their annual Thanks-giving Dinner in our Fellowship Hall. With four turkeys purchased with donations from members of Peace Church, over 100 "new arrivals" had a wonderful feast of food, fellowship, and gratitude. Along with the great food, the event was blessed by an interfaith prayer featuring religious leaders from the Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox Christian, and Buddhist traditions (see photo at right). Peace Church volunteers included **Russ Haver, Eileen Johnson, Rachel Johnson, Clodagh Leszinski (w/James), and Amy Williams (w/Haley & Evie)**. Thanks to everyone for a great event!!



All  
the  
Best

A wonderful, albeit bittersweet going away party was held for **Frances Johnson**, who has moved out to Encinitas, California to live with her daughter. Frances is quite a special friend to us and we will miss her here at Peace Church.



## Peace Thanksgiving Feast





Peace United Church of Christ  
2714 W. Market St.  
Greensboro, NC 27403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



"We must carry on the work commanded by Jesus Christ and allow the Holy Spirit to use us to not only bring souls to Christ but also to manifest healings and deliverance here on earth. If we follow Jesus' model, we will need to get to know some people that

we may think we do not have anything in common. He is not asking us to heal the whole world, but just those you and I interact with in our daily lives. It is time for us to allow the Holy Spirit to move freely in us so that those we are connected to can do the same!

***"Here I am, Use me Lord!"***

(From "Early Riser Inspirational")

**Enjoy the "Gift of Caring" this Christmas.**



The Men's Fellowship Annual Brunswick Stew sale was a great success! These guys took turns stirring the "brew" all day long until it was just right. Pictured here, left to right, are John Syster, Mick McGrogan, Joe Small, volunteer from NAI, Tom Warren, and David Fesperman.



**Please keep these members of our church family in your thoughts and prayers:**

Lois Bell; Dot Benshoff; Bertie Bowman; Nan Buchanan; David Fesperman; Millie Harmon; Jim & Mary Lillie; Buddy Lippard; Carol MacDonald; Sally McGrogan; Abigail Miller-Warren; Sharon Mitchell; Mary Ann Murray; Jack & Marcy Neal; Gertrude Radford; Becky Taylor; Lucille Waynick; Kelly Wyrick; Doris Yeates.

**Remember these wider church family and friends:**

**Lyn Ann Bailey** (niece of Harold Poffenbaugh); **Chris Barnes** (nephew of Harold Poffenbaugh); **Katie Bowen** (daughter-in-law of Cynthia Bowen); **Boley Brown** (brother-in-law of Sherri Vestal); **Eric Chapman** (nephew of Jane Ford); **Janet Faucette** (sister-in-law of Yvonne Smothers); **Donna Green** (friend of Maria Smith); **Theresa Grill** (neighbor of Sue Smith); **Betty Larimer** (aunt of Trish Larimer); **Beatrice Rosenthal** (mother of David Dole); **Annette Sarty** (sister of Yvonne Poffenbaugh); **Michael Shoffner** (grandson of Edith Sink); **Tom & Rhoda Taylor** (niece & her husband of Harold Poffenbaugh).

**ATTENDANCE & OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER**

DATE	SUNDAY SCHOOL	WORSHIP	REGULAR OFFERING	OTHER OFFERING
November 4	9	67	\$2,726	\$209
November 11	8	88	\$5,437	\$ 60
November 18	8	69	\$8,414	\$125
November 25	8	65	\$928	\$315

**PEACE CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY**

(Through October 31, 2018)

	Current Month	Year to Date	YTD Budget	Amount Over (Under) Budget
Contributions from Members & Friends, Plus Other Receipts	17,799	167,312	165,560	1,752
Disbursed in Support of Ministries, Programs & Facilities	18,407	162,237	166,990	(4,753)
CROP Walk, Hurricane Relief Buckets, Hands-On, Tiny House, Neighbors In Need	1,401			



***December Birthdays***



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3 Tommy Haithcock	4 Rachel Bennett Jeff Wyrick	5 Rosina Whitfield	6 Laurie Baker	7	8
9 Ian Myers	10	11	12 Dave Dole	13 John Patterson	14	15
16	17	18 Ramona Griffin Daniel Warren	19	20	21	22 Alexa Dole
23 Toni Tagert	24 Lib Patterson	25	26 Russ Haver Olivia Jolliff Laura Small	27	28 Don Wheeling	29
30 Jimmy Norred Evan York	31 Deb Shiner					