

PEACEPRESS



Pastor's Perspective

Well, a glorious new year has begun and there is much to look forward to in 2023! Let me highlight some of the happenings that I am particularly excited about:

First, on Sunday, January 22nd our choir regrouped for their first rehearsal since the pandemic hit us in February 2020! This is great news and with our very talented and deeply committed (and faithful) leader Elisabeth Penry at the helm, we are all excited to sing to the Lord. The choir is open to anyone and our first choral piece will be offered during worship on Sunday, February 5th. Join us!!

Second, like our choir, the UCC Cuba Study Seminar trip has not travelled since February 2020. This year's trip is scheduled for February 9th-19th and will include a

total of 19 participants. We are very excited to reconnect with our friends at the Lavastida Christian Center in Santiago as well as other friends around the island. There will be a blessing of this trip and its participants on Sunday, February 5th.

Third, our wonderfully successful Jambalaya Sale is scheduled for Saturday, February 25th from 10:00am-2:00pm. Place your order now for what promises to be fantastically tasty jambalaya!!

Fourth, our Lenten Soup & Study program kicks off on Thursday, February 23rd at 6:00pm in the Preparation Room with homemade soup and bread followed by study and discussion at 6:30pm. We will meet each Thursday evening in Lent concluding on Thursday, March 30th.

Fifth, as part of the Season of Lent we will have special services on Ash Wednesday (7:00pm on 2/22); Maundy Thursday (6:00pm on 4/6); Good Friday worship (7:00pm on 4/7);

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and Easter worship at 10:45am.

These events kick off our new year. There will be many other events as our year unfolds, but let us get this party started!

Blessings,
Pastor Tom

A Note from Elisabeth

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

Psalm 95: 1-2 (NIV)

Peace is following the directive given above from the Psalms to “sing for joy to the Lord.” On January 22nd at 9:30 am in the sanctuary, we began practicing with a group of 9 people in preparation to sing in worship on February 5th. We would love to see this number grow. February 5th is a first Sunday when we traditionally celebrate Communion, so it is a special day to re-introduce a singing ensemble. The plan is to sing "In Remembrance" which we have sung before. Fortunately, it is on our OneLicense, so we can legally sing it on the livestream. Special music is something we have to check, not just hymns. Just

because a title is on one of our licenses doesn't mean our arrangement is.

The current plan is to rehearse on Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 10:15, and sing about once a month for worship. Please know that you are welcome to join us. It has been my belief through the years that a choir should reflect the membership of the church. Therefore, you will hopefully see representation of all in the choir.

As we move through February, we come to the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 22nd in anticipation of Easter on April 9th . During Lent, music is usually more

contemplative and focused on personal reflection and penitence. Our hymnal index only lists five hymns specifically for Lent beginning with page 179, Forty Days and Forty Nights, which beautifully describes our journey through Lent. Please try using it as part of your meditation as you prepare your heart for the resurrection. Once again, remember you are invited to come sing at 9:30 on Sunday mornings, and if you have any questions please call me, e-mail me, or talk to me at church.

Solar Power... at Peace Church?

A conversation has begun about possibly investing in solar panels to help power our church building. On the heels of a generous gift given to the church with the expressed intent of it being used for solar panels, the Consistory has approved the exploration of what it would entail to purchase and install a solar panel system.

As a first effort to gain some knowledge of solar panels, we will be having a meeting with Armghan "Mani" Aslam of the 8M Solar Company. This is an open meeting for all members and friends of Peace Church which will take place on February 3rd at 4PM in the Preparation Room.

On January 13th, Pastor Tom, Jane Ford, Russ Haver, and Elisabeth Penry met with Rev. Paul Davis of Congregational United Church of Christ to see firsthand their new solar panel

system and learn what it cost them, various rebates and grants they acquired to lower the cost, and what they hope to save in electrical bills over the long run.

At this time 8M Solar Company has provided us with an estimated cost for a system appropriate for our building at \$93,275.00. Peace Church has qualified for 30% Federal Tax Credit of \$27,983.00 as well as a Duke Power Rebate of \$30,000.00 rendering the net cost of this system at \$35,293.00 with an energy offset of 86%.

Please join us on Friday, February 3rd at 4PM in the Preparation Room for this very important meeting to help us assess the viability of solar power for Peace Church. See you there!

Upcoming Guest Preachers

Due to Pastor Tom and Kim Miller's travel and leadership of the UCC Cuba Study Seminar, we will have two guest preachers in February.

On Sunday, February 12th our guest preacher will be the Reverend Gary Owens, retired pastor and member of Hope UCC in Whitsett, North Carolina. On Sunday, February 19th our guest preacher will be the Reverend Kendra Joyner-Miller, UCC pastor and new Chaplain at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina.

We are very blessed to have these wonderful pastors and preachers in our midst. Please plan to give them both a grand and very warm welcome!!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- **1st - Sally McGrogan**
- **2nd - Kathleen Saunders**
- **5th - Jean Jones**
- **10th - Ciaran Leszinski**
- **13th - Logan Hindson**
- **24th - Clodagh Leszinski**
- **27th - Harold Poffenbaugh**
- **28th - Kelly Savage**
- **15th - Aaron Virgilio**
- **21st - Olivia Saunders**

Recipe Corner

Recipe by Karen Haver

Graham Cracker Toffee Bars

Ingredients: 1 stick of butter

1 cup packed brown sugar

2 packs of graham crackers

1 cup of chopped pecans

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°. Arrange graham crackers on parchment paper on 15x13 tray. Melt stick of butter over low heat. Add 1 cup of packed brown sugar to butter. Stir over low-med heat until it comes to a full rolling boil. Boil 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add in chopped pecans. Pour over crackers and spread out. Bake at 350° for 7 minutes. Cool 10 minutes, cut into pieces. Cool completely and store in an airtight container.

Can also top with broken Hershey bar pieces after it comes out of the oven and smooth melted chocolate.

Mission of the Month

When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the Church World Service Blankets program was created---to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.

Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters.

A gift of just \$10 provides a warm, comforting blanket to children, men, and women who are struggling against the cold. It is a simple way to offer people hope and to share Christ's love with other

people. This is a perfect time to give thanks for the warmth in our homes and our hearts by providing CWS blankets to those in need. Please give generously.

Lenten Soup & Study Series

As we move toward Lent, we are pleased to announce a Lenten Bible study and worship series called Unfinished: Discovering God's Call in the Not Yet. Beginning with our Ash Wednesday service (February 22 @ 7:00pm) and continuing on through to Easter Sunday (April 9th) we will be focusing each Sunday worship service on the components of God's calling which will include: Called to Renewal (Ash Wednesday), Called to Values (Feb. 26th), Called to Openness (March 5th), Called by God (March 12th), Called to Attentiveness (March 19th), Called to Regret (March 26th), Called to Experience God's Presence (April 2nd), and Called to Resurrection (April 9th).

Our Lenten Soup & Study series will meet on Thursday evenings at 6:00pm for a simple meal of soup and bread and then discussion/study beginning at 6:30pm. The Soup & Study series will begin on Thursday, February 23rd and will run through Thursday, March 30th; a total of six (6) sessions. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for all those interested in this Bible study program. Please join us!!

Important Dates

- Tuesday, 6th - Women's Fellowship
- Wednesday, 7th - Hands-On
- Tuesday, 14th - Valentine's Day
- Tuesday, 20th - President's Day (Church office Closed)
- Wednesday, 22nd - Ash Wednesday
- Saturday, 25th - Jambalaya Sale!! Will take place from 10AM to 2PM. Get your preorders in now!



Here is a note from Piedmont Crossing:
"On behalf of the Residents, we thank you for the beautiful, wonderful pillows

that your ministry group made. These Residents are always grateful to receive these. They are a blessing, and we wish you God's blessings on every person in 'Hands-On'!

Sincerely, Piedmont Crossing"

Pictured below is pillow recipient, Laura Boerum in Silver Spring Massachusetts, who sent in a picture using their pillow! She is a friend of Lynn Thompson and an alumna of UNCG class of 1979.

Her notes about the pillow:

"I would be honored if you shared that silly photo of me with my head on the pillow with the people who made it. Please do thank them for me and explain how it fits just perfectly for my needs - other neck pillows curl around and interfere with my neck/heart catheter that hooks up to the tubes through which I get dialysis. Their work is a gift and a blessing!"



General Synod 34

Article Taken from UCC Website

“Making All Things New” will be the theme of the 34th biennial General Synod of the United Church of Christ, scheduled for June 30–July 4, 2023, in Indianapolis. The scripture verse is from Isaiah 43:18-19: “Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

The logo, said the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Synod administrator, is open to interpretation.

“A good logo makes you imagine, it makes you think, it makes you find yourself in it,” she said. “With the logo design, we wanted to think about what ‘newness’ looks like – about something emerging – like a sunrise or a petal opening – something that’s welcoming. “There are clearly images of creation, of green, a wave, a sunrise, a flower. It speaks of creating and created – and points to possibility. We want people to look at the logo and see, from their own experience, something new.”

What things are new:

“Making All Things New” was confirmed March 10 by vote of the 13-member General Synod Program and Planning Committee and presented to the United Church of Christ Board for affirmation at its March 11 meeting via Zoom.

“The General Synod Program and Planning Committee hopes that ‘Making All Things New’ evokes a post-pandemic time,” said Bob Sandman, a member of Lakeview UCC, Maineville, Ohio, and General Synod moderator. “And the theme prepares the way for the election of a new general minister and president. In Isaiah 43:19, God says, ‘I am about to do a new thing.’ So the logo shows what could be a rising sun or a blooming flower over flowing springs.”

“‘Making All Things New’ resonated with all the members of the GSPPC,” Thompson said. “Coming out of the pandemic, we see something new emerging, not just as a church, but as people. We may also see some new things about how we approach Synod, with General Synod 34. “What they are, we don’t know yet. We’ve learned so much, putting on the virtual General Synod last year. How will that enhance the experience the next time?”

For example, Thompson said, “Prerecording the educational intensives was a wonderful experience. We might want to continue to prerecord those informational events so all delegates can access all the intensives, not just those for the committees on which they serve.” She noted that delegates were not running from Point A to Point B to be informed about more than one resolution during the virtual 2021 Synod. That’s worth thinking about. Going forward, Synod planners are also thinking about folks who may not be able to attend in person, but want the event experience.

Defining ‘hybrid’

With the logo, theme and scripture determined, Thompson and her team can start to plan, structure, design – and define – the event. “A hybrid General Synod is still to be defined,” she said. “The event has long been live-streamed, but with the pandemic, live streaming has been more embedded in our consciousness as a way of engagement. We are looking at what we layer with streaming to make it more engaging to others who are not participating live with us on site.”



Cuba Study 2023

On Friday, February 10th, an early morning flight will depart Miami International Airport with a group of 19 participants making up the 2023 UCC Cuba Study Seminar. Hailing from as far away as Juneau, Alaska and O’ahu, Hawaii and as nearby as Chapel Hill, North Carolina, this years’ group represents the first UCC contingent to visit Cuba since early 2020.

For nearly three years now Cuba has been struggling with a number of factors that have created very difficult living conditions for the Cuban people. Covid led to the complete shutdown of the tourist sector, the primary engine of the Cuban economy. The 60-year-old U.S. economic blockade of Cuba was strengthened once again by the previous U.S. administration with over 400 new restrictions placed on the Cuban government, very few of which have been removed by the Biden Administration. Times have been tough, to say the least.

Despite these troubles, Cuba was able to develop three Covid-19 vaccinations which were made available to their entire population. The tourist trade is opening up again, and new economic deals have been negotiated with various nations for food supplies, fuel, and some medicines.

Our trip will have many of the components of previous years, including a 5 day stay in Santiago with Revs. Elmer and Gisela Lavastida and the staff at the Lavastida Center. It will be great to be with our Cuban brothers and sisters again, and to re-establish many deep friendships that we have developed over the years.

The financial contributions given during January will be hand delivered to the Lavastida Center staff when Pastor Tom and Kim and the entire group are down there in February. This promises to be a great reunion! Please pray for Pastor Tom and Kim as they embark on this important seminar.

Peace United Church of Christ - Greensboro NC
Treasurer's Report as of December 2022 for General Fund

Monday, January 23, 2023

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Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Offerings					
4001	Pledges	8,845.95	114,342.62	118,228.00	3,885.38
4003	Loose Offerings	255.00	1,440.98	500.00	(940.98)
4004	Initial Offerings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4006	Non Pledge Offerings	18,870.00	26,788.00	4,000.00	(22,788.00)
4007	Sunday School	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
	Total Offerings	\$27,970.95	\$142,571.60	\$122,828.00	(\$19,743.60)
Fundraising					
4102	Jambalaya	0.00	3,430.53	2,500.00	(930.53)
4104	Yard Sale	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
4106	Brunswick Stew	40.00	2,867.40	1,500.00	(1,367.40)
4121	History Room	0.00	1,540.23		
	Total Fundraising	\$40.00	\$7,838.16	\$5,000.00	(\$1,297.93)
Special Offerings					
4009	Communion	10.00	67.85	500.00	432.15
4108	Birthday/Thank You	0.00	400.00	100.00	(300.00)
4110	Christmas	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
4112	Easter	0.00	20.00	50.00	30.00
4114	Memorials	1,000.00	1,525.93	0.00	(1,525.93)
4116	Thanksgiving	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
	Total Special Offerings	\$1,010.00	\$2,013.78	\$850.00	(\$1,163.78)
Other Services					
4118	Weddings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Other Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Miscellaneous Income					
Facility Use Donations					
4124	New Arrivals Institute	7,500.00	25,550.00	18,000.00	(7,550.00)
4126	Narcotics Anonymous	75.00	934.00	900.00	(34.00)
4128	Alliance Church	250.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00
4130	Fellowship Hall Use	0.00	1,200.00	500.00	(700.00)
	Total Facilities Use Donations	\$7,825.00	\$30,684.00	\$22,400.00	(\$8,284.00)
4122	Miscellaneous Income	85.00	75.00	0.00	(75.00)
4123	Sales Tax Refund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Miscellaneous Income	\$7,910.00	\$30,759.00	\$22,400.00	(\$8,359.00)
4107	Second Mile Donations	0.00	40.00		
4109	Easter Lilies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Monday, January 23, 2023

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Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
4129	Online Worship	0.00	1,000.00		
	Total Offering Income	\$36,930.95	\$184,222.54	\$151,078.00	(\$30,564.31)
Expenses					
Missions					
5001	OCWM	0.00	3,000.00		
5003	Community Outreach Publicity	0.00	179.96	400.00	220.04
5005	Community Outreach Events	0.00	109.10	100.00	(9.10)
	Total Missions	\$0.00	\$3,289.06	\$500.00	\$210.94
Consistory					
5101	PeaceCare	28.50	345.10	350.00	4.90
5103	Membership Growth	0.00	185.80	500.00	314.20
5104	Membership Support	0.00	786.60	500.00	(286.60)
5105	Worship Committee	81.78	1,619.38	1,600.00	(19.38)
5106	Stewardship	0.00	207.39	250.00	42.61
	Total Consistory	\$110.28	\$3,144.27	\$3,200.00	\$55.73
Christian Ed					
5117	Christian Ed Literature/Supplies	0.00	86.62	400.00	313.38
5119	Youth Fellowship	24.18	24.18	500.00	475.82
	Total Christian Ed	\$24.18	\$110.80	\$900.00	\$789.20
Property					
5210	Janitorial	700.00	8,600.00	8,800.00	200.00
5212	Grounds	416.67	5,000.04	5,417.00	416.96
5214	Property Insurance	938.18	12,805.80	15,000.00	2,194.20
5216	Building Equipment/Maintenance	424.29	7,924.54	10,000.00	2,075.46

5216	Building Equipment/Maintenance	424.29	7,924.54	10,000.00	2,075.46
5217	Boiler Maintenance	0.00	13,485.03	3,000.00	(10,485.03)
5219	ADT Security	48.86	573.57	600.00	26.43
5221	Supplies	0.00	857.46	900.00	42.54
	Total Property	\$2,528.00	\$49,246.44	\$43,717.00	(\$5,529.44)
Administration					
5401	Postage	(9.30)	788.83	1,300.00	511.17
5403	Office Equipment Lease	173.74	3,406.77	4,000.00	593.23
5405	Computer Software/Maintenance	0.00	619.88	500.00	(119.88)
5407	Telephone/Internet	249.18	2,993.90	3,000.00	6.10
5409	Office Supplies	0.00	1,168.56	1,500.00	331.44
5410	Miscellaneous Expenses	139.32	249.30	1,000.00	750.70
5412	Bank Charges	31.60	448.36	500.00	51.64

Monday, January 23, 2023

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Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
	Total Administration	\$584.54	\$9,675.60	\$11,800.00	\$2,124.40
Utilities					
5301	Gas	1,499.00	11,348.14	15,000.00	3,651.86
5303	Electricity	700.57	9,543.53	10,500.00	956.47
5304	Water	400.48	4,698.40	4,900.00	201.60
	Total Utilities	\$2,600.05	\$25,590.07	\$30,400.00	\$4,809.93
Pastoral Compensation					
5501	Cash Salary	2,790.84	33,490.08	33,491.00	0.92
5503	Housing Allowance	1,416.66	16,999.92	17,000.00	0.08
5505	Social Security Reimb.	321.88	3,862.56	3,862.00	(0.56)
5507	Annuity	336.60	4,039.20	4,040.00	0.80
5509	Insurance	1,745.37	19,528.19	19,500.00	(28.19)
5510	Medical Reimb.	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
5511	Mileage Reimb.	141.00	459.02	500.00	40.98
	Total Pastoral Compensation	\$6,752.35	\$80,878.97	\$80,893.00	\$14.03
Personnel					
5601	Organist/Dir of Music	800.00	9,800.00	15,600.00	5,800.00
5603	Secretary	1,440.00	15,525.00	15,600.00	75.00
5605	Nursery Attendant	16.50	708.40	1,800.00	1,091.60
5607	Youth Leadership	720.00	3,258.00	10,750.00	7,492.00
	Total Personnel	\$2,976.50	\$29,291.40	\$43,750.00	\$14,458.60
Personnel Benefits					
5612	Social Security Exp.	227.70	2,240.87	2,713.00	472.13
5614	Worker's Comp Insurance	0.00	266.00	1,300.00	1,034.00
5618	Conference & Meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Personnel Benefits	\$227.70	\$2,506.87	\$4,013.00	\$1,506.13
Fundraising Expenses					
5701	Jambalaya Expense	0.00	1,269.08	1,000.00	(269.08)
5703	Yard Sale Expenses	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
5705	Brunswick Stew Expenses	1,179.71	1,502.96	500.00	(1,002.96)
5707	History Room Expenses	0.00	3,772.13		
	Total Fundraising Expenses	\$1,179.71	\$6,544.17	\$1,700.00	(\$1,072.04)
	Total Expenses	\$16,983.31	\$210,277.65	\$220,873.00	\$17,367.48
Difference		\$19,947.64	(\$26,055.11)	(\$69,795.00)	