



# umstead park

UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

*a thoughtful and progressive community of faith*

January 2019

8208 Brownleigh Drive

Raleigh, NC 27617

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

FAITH IN ACTION

## New Year, Fresh Start

### ***Suggestions for New Year's Rituals***

*Among her many books, Sister Sandra DeGidio, OSM, wrote a simple but meaningful piece suggesting rituals for the New Year:*

Take time to reflect on the people that mattered most to you, your greatest accomplishment, challenging difficulties and the lessons you learned. Contemplate the patterns in your life that keep you stuck. Write down the limiting beliefs or habits that you wish to leave behind with the old year. In a fireproof bowl or fireplace, burn the paper. As the paper burns, be aware that you have just made space for new ideas, people, and opportunities to enter your life. Carefully, throw out the ashes when they cool.

Light a candle for those who have passed on to spirit.

Light a candle for your new potential in the coming year.

Light a candle to acknowledge the earth. Plant a tree.

Forgive, forgive, forgive- end the old year by opening your heart to yourself and others.

***Here are some additional specific possibilities you can start off in this New Year at UPUCC. See the rest of this newsletter to:***

#### *Volunteer*

*In addition to monetary support, the gift of your time to UPUCC is greatly appreciated! Ways to assist can be found on pages seven and eight.*

#### *Serve as Hosts for Eliseo*

*Listen out for the next volunteer training offered. We can always use more hosts.*

#### *Explore the realm of Christian Meditation*

*As announced in last month's newsletter ([link](#)) we are delighted to have J. Dana Trent with us on January 13. See page six.*



J. Dana Trent

#### *Have More Fun and Connect with Others*

*The Fellowship Committee is offering multiple ways to meet more folks. Page five has the details of an upcoming event.*

#### *Become a UPUCC Advocate and Help Change this Corner of the World!*

*See page six.*

#### *March for Women's Equality-*

*Saturday, January 26. Halifax Mall. See page five.*



*Come to All the Justice Theater Project Productions!  
Next up? See page eight.*

### Playing Fair

Let me start by being fair, and honest, with you. Bringing Eliseo into our church while he pursued legal strategies to resist deportation and remain with his family was new territory for us all. No one regrets having done this and, in fact, it is hard to imagine life without Eliseo among us (Though one happy day I hope we will have to adjust to him being back in Greensboro!). We've learned much along the way... and have the sense that we will continue learning for quite some time.

Herein, I lean on instruction Jesus gave his disciples:

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves."  
(Matthew 10:16-NIV)

I like to paraphrase this advice of Jesus as: "Keep your eyes wide-open and your arms opened-wide."



And 'sheep among wolves'...? Just who *are* the wolves?

I've been mulling this verse over a lot lately, particularly since the day after Thanksgiving, when Samuel Oliver-Bruno was arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers in Morrisville. Media reports largely portrayed this as 'dirty tactics' by I.C.E. Samuel was 'lured out' of his safe church setting and pounced upon, they reported.

Alas, it was not so. The decision to step outside the church was freely made. In truth, ICE was actually provoked. Let me explain.

In mid-August, at the invitation of a local advocacy group, 5 undocumented persons in Sanctuary gathered for a weekend 'retreat' in Durham. One came from Ohio, and another from Texas, while three were from NC.

"Stop!" I hear you silently shout while raising numerous immediate questions:

"Isn't it illegal to transport immigrants in Sanctuary?" "How can someone publicly announce they are seeking refuge with a congregation and then, periodically, secretly leave?" "What's to keep ICE from swooping in and arresting them all in one place?" "Doesn't this put their families in even more jeopardy?"

For these reasons and more, when UPUCC was approached about 'hosting' this regional gathering of persons in Sanctuary, we quickly said "No." At least one other congregation in the Triangle gave the same answer. The organizers were persistent, however, and found an amenable host ...and Samuel attended... as did a friendly-to-the-organizers, invited reporter. Check out their report: <https://rewire.news/article/2018/08/23/exclusive-five-immigrants-briefly-leave-sanctuary-to-learn-how-to-organize/>

At the gathering, the gathered immigrants were led to a strategy that, among other things, required them to be fingerprinted at a Citizenship and Immigration Services Office. They chose this path stipulating they leave their place of safety ...and Samuel was the first to present himself.

It did not go well.

While I am completely sympathetic to Samuel and his family, and as much as I disagree with the general stance of ICE, it is incorrect to state that ICE tricked or entrapped him in this instance. The decision to request a humanitarian petition was clearly a risky strategy, and despite warnings from several in the NC Sanctuary Coalition that removing Samuel from the church grounds made him completely vulnerable to ICE, it was a path they willingly embarked upon.

So let me ask a simple question? If you were in the shoes of ICE, and you saw folks in Sanctuary and their supporters flaunting 'secret' meetings online (even traveling across state lines for multiple day and night gatherings)... would you feel compelled to arrest them the next time they stepped out of their 'sanctuaries'?

I suspect so.

ICE did only what they said they would do in such a case.

*continued on page three...*

## from doug *continued...*

*...continued from page two...*

Why am I writing about this now? Because I am convinced that the ‘over-vilification’ of ICE in the event in which Samuel was arrested and other similar events seriously hurts the cause of Eliseo and others in the undocumented community. We need to candidly admit that ICE could be far more aggressive within the bounds of the law, should they make that choice. Cornering ICE only taunts them to be more aggressive.

Rather than provoke ICE, rather than mischaracterize them as ‘evil incarnate’, rather than treat them as non-human, we must attempt to reach out to them. If we are to be “as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” we must also be truthful even when we find it fundamentally troubling. We may find ICE highly problematic, but let us make sure we do not villainize them inappropriately.

To do otherwise only exacerbates the difficulties for Eliseo and others in his predicament.

As challenging as it might be, in this New Year as we move forward, let us “Keep our eyes wide-open and our arms opened-wide.”

For the sake of those we love, and those we are trying to...

Doug

## children

**Photos from the Children's Nativity Tableau  
during Christmas Eve Worship**



## **Youth January Schedule**

**January 6 - 11:30am-1:30pm**

*Youth Group meets.*

**January 13 - 11:30am-1:30pm**

*Youth Group meets.*

**January 18-21**

### ***Youth Retreat at Blowing Rock***

*Youth will carpool to Blowing Rock Conference Center where we'll attend the Southern/SE Conference UCC Winter Youth Retreat! We'll spend time in discussion groups, worship, skiing or snow tubing, and having fun!*

**January 27 - 11:30am-1:30pm**

*Youth Group meets.*

# stewardship & finance

## **Financial "To-Do's" as We Kick Off 2019**

2019 is a big year for us as we look to raise funds to make some needed repairs to our building roof and HVAC, and also look at other ways to live into our covenant and enhance our ministries, such as solar panels, garden space, and additional multipurpose space.

But first, we need to ensure we are on a good track with our operational budget. If you made changes to your pledge, now is the time to follow-up to ensure that your contributions reflect your new pledge. So if you have automatic payments from your bank, now is the time update those payments to reflect your new pledge. If you use the church auto-draft features, please be sure to communicate with Vickie Teal ([vickie@upucc.org](mailto:vickie@upucc.org)) to authorize her to update to your new amounts. Your pledge is not enough to authorize Vickie to make changes to your draft (unless you checked "I authorize the church to make changes to my draft" on your pledge card). Please check to make certain your January auto-drafts will be the amount that you expect.

On the capital campaign front, some task forces are meeting to plan the different components of the projects. There is a carbon neutrality group talking about reducing our carbon footprint. There is a group looking at how we might enhance our exterior with some functional garden space for celebrations, reflection, and youth play space. And there is a group looking at how we can maximize the use of our space for our ministries and community to its fullest potential. If you are interested in joining these discussions, please reach out to Doug Long ([doug@upucc.org](mailto:doug@upucc.org)) or Mark Stevens ([markstevensrtp@gmail.com](mailto:markstevensrtp@gmail.com)).

## faith in action

### Women's March on Raleigh

On the anniversary of the Women's March, people will gather again in Raleigh in the spirit of social justice and resistance to the current administration. This year's march is a celebration of Women Leading the Resistance and will uplift voices and stories of communities that are affected by present oppressive policies. The UPUCC Faith in Action committee encourages UPUCC members to attend the march and be part of this effort to empower our community and keep its activist spirit alive. Preliminary details are below, and Faith in Action will keep the congregation informed as more specifics become available:

Gather: January 26th, 2019 • 10:00 a.m.

There will be resistance music from 10-11a.m.

We plan to march first, at 10 a.m., and the rally begins at 11:00 a.m.

Location:

Halifax Mall

6 West Jones St.

Raleigh, NC 27601

Host Contact Info: [womensmarchonraleigh@gmail.com](mailto:womensmarchonraleigh@gmail.com)

Event Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1977975525601394/>

### *from the Creativity Group*

We are incredibly grateful for all who have supported our card ministry during the past few weeks. Thanks to all of you, a check for \$1300 was given to Eliseo and family in mid-December. Additional money given as donations came in during the last part of December. As this is written, we still have one Sunday left to offer cards on Sunday morning, and we will have cards at four performances of Black Nativity. This year we took orders for over 600 Christmas cards. We continue to have many one-of-a-kind cards for different occasions, also.

We will be setting up our table once again on January 26, February 3, and February 10. Think Valentines!

Thank you also for your donations of Forever Stamps. Our Healing Transitions friends truly appreciate the chance to be able to make and send a card to someone. Our next visit there is January 9. We meet to depart from church at 2:30 p.m. and spend 3-4 p.m. with the women at Healing Transitions. Please join us!

*-Submitted by Marcia Welsh*

## fellowship



### Games Gathering

*Saturday, January 12, 3:00-5:00 p.m. in the Worship Space*

The Fellowship Committee will host an afternoon game time. There will be a few games - each with a leader to host the game table and explain rules. UPUCC members can grab a seat at the table of their choice. You can also bring your favorite game to share with others. If you like, bring an easy-to-eat finger food to share. Fellowship Committee will provide drinks.

Questions? Contact Elizabeth Altman, [ebugaltman@gmail.com](mailto:ebugaltman@gmail.com).

## faith in action *continued...*

### ***from the UPUCC Advocacy Task Force***

Thank you for supporting and participating to make our second year meaningful. We held a number of meetings with legislators in the NC General Assembly and conducted two major registration and Get Out The Vote campaigns (Primary and Midterms elections) including a booth at JTP performances. Your votes contributed to a significant impact in local, statewide and national levels.

From our education “hat” we had three Adult Ed Forums:

- (1) Immigration issues with Alerta Migratoria,
- (2) Redistricting reform with Bob Phillips of Common Cause, and
- (3) Analysis of election results with Brett Stargell.

We also held a town hall meeting at which Martine Aurelien of the Justice Center discussed the six Amendments on the ballot, co-sponsored an event with Keep Families Safe, and got to know newly elected Wake County Sheriff, Gerald Baker.

From our maintenance “hat” we revised our UPUCC database to reflect the new legislative districts, no small task indeed. We also have created a new email address system that lets us keep our Advocacy email in a separate account.

Gun safety is one of our Key Results Areas (KRAs) and currently Erin Andrews and Meredith Pope are working on finding ways to get this critical message out.

For 2019 our KRAs are Redistricting Reform, Gun Safety, Immigration Reform and continuing relationship building with legislators in the NC General Assembly and on the national level.

We look forward to January with the NC General Assembly back in session and are hopeful that the election results give both Democrats and Republicans reasons to support Redistricting Reform. We plan to participate with Common Cause on this issue in the first quarter of 2019.

## adult education

### **January Forums**

January 6 - 9:30 a.m. “New Year’s Resolutions and other Fables (or Fantasies) of Change: A Discussion of Change --What Works and What Doesn’t.” We all know that New Year’s Resolutions mostly don’t work. Come participate in a discussion of change. What is your experience? What works and what doesn’t. What are some new tools for supporting change?

January 13 - As announced in our newsletter last month, Reverend J. Dana Trent will preach and lead our after-church forum on Sunday, January 13. Occasionally, over the past two years, Dana and her husband have worshipped with us here at UPUCC. She is a graduate of Duke Divinity School, a teacher of World Religions and author of three books. The after church forum that day will feature Dana and her newest book- *One Breath at a Time: A Skeptic’s Guide to Christian Mediation*. Want more insight into Dana and her thinking? Check out this recent submission in Sojourner’s Magazine: <https://sojo.net/articles/how-stillness-can-sustain-our-activism>

January 20 - 9:30 a.m. Marcia and Gary Welsh tell the remarkable story of their former exchange student’s life journeys.

On January 27, Forum will not be held due to the Congregational Meeting and Potluck.

# january service calendar at upucc

## January 6

Altar Prep: Eleanor Smith

Communion Prep: Leslie Heavey

Coffee Set-Up:

Greeters:

Ushers:

Sound System:

Auditor:

Assistant Treasurer:

Clean-Team: Edward McFarland, Linda Hébert,  
Jessica & Shawn Holmes, Mark &  
Melanie Stevens.

## January 13

Altar Prep: Leslie Heavey

Coffee Set-Up: Elaina & Robert Richardson

Greeters:

Ushers:

Sound System:

Auditor:

Assistant Treasurer:

Clean-Team: Mary Pat Peters, Eliseo Jimenez, Vickie  
Teal, Elaina & Robert Richardson.

## January 20

Altar Prep: Eleanor Smith

Coffee Set-Up: Lori Del Negro & Roger Sommer

Greeters:

Ushers:

Sound System:

Auditor:

Assistant Treasurer:

Clean-Team: Tim Champion & Dan Harrell,  
Chris Ousley, Ada & Colin McKerrell

## January 27 (Congregational Meeting)

Altar Prep: Michael Lester

Coffee Set-Up:

Greeters:

Ushers:

Sound System:

Auditor:

Assistant Treasurer:

Clean-Team: Carol & Nevin Fouts, Scott Pope,  
Doug Long & Janice Odom.

**It's very clear -  
We need more volunteers!  
Click the [link](#),  
and put us in the pink!**



# upucc january calendar

Tues.	Jan. 1		New Year's Day
Wed.	Jan. 2	7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sun.	Jan. 6	9:30 a.m.	Forum: New Year's Resolutions and other Fables. See page six.
		10:30 a.m.	Epiphany Worship & Communion: "Sharing Our Epiphanies," Doug Long preaching.
		Following worship	Newcomers & Inquirers Session in the library.
		Following worship	Advocacy Group in the large atrium conference room.
		Following worship	Youth Christmas Throwback Party.
Wed.	Jan. 9	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sat.	Jan. 12	10:00 a.m.	Meditation Group with Lynn Coye in the library.
		3:00-5:00 p.m.	Fellowship Game Event. See page five.
Sun.	Jan. 13	9:30 a.m.	Committee Meeting Time.
		10:30 a.m.	Worship: J Dana Trent preaching.
		Following worship	Forum: J Dana Trent. See page six.
		Following worship	Youth meet.
Tues.	Jan. 15	9:30 a.m.	Creativity Group meets in the library.
Wed.	Jan. 16	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Thurs.	Jan. 17	7:00 p.m.	Coordinating Council in the library.
		Midnight	UPUCC February Newsletter deadline.
Fri.-Mon.	Jan. 18-21		UCC Winter Youth Retreat at Blowing Rock, NC
Sat.	Jan. 19	9:30 a.m.	Yoga with Ellen Beidler in the worship space.
Sun.	Jan. 20	9:30 a.m.	Forum: Marcia and Gary Welsh tell a remarkable story. See page six.
		10:30 a.m.	Worship: "If Martin Were Still with Us," Doug Long preaching. Alice Jermyn & Jerry Lipsky also celebrate a renewal of their vows in worship.
		11:30 a.m.	Youth meet.
		12:00 p.m.	Worship & Music Committee in the library.
Mon.	Jan. 21		Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Wed.	Jan. 23	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sun.	Jan. 27	10:30 a.m.	Worship: "The Road Is Long," Doug Long preaching.
		Following worship	UPUCC Congregational Meeting & All-Church Potluck.
		Following worship	Youth meet.
Mon.	Jan. 28	7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Men's Group. Contact <a href="mailto:reedaltman@gmail.com">reedaltman@gmail.com</a> for details.
Wed.	Jan. 30	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.

***-Embrace our common life, overflowing with compassion and liberal in love;  
-Call forth and nurture our individual and collective creative gifts;  
-Delight in humor and, through joyous celebration, savor the goodness of life.***