

# umstead park

UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

*a thoughtful and progressive community of faith*

March 2019

8208 Brownleigh Drive

Raleigh, NC 27617

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

## March with Us!

### Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper & Talent Show

*Food begins at 5:30 p.m. Talent Show at 6:15 p.m.*

Tuesday, March 5, in the worship space. Come celebrate Fat Tuesday UPUCC style. Enjoy delicious pancakes, jambalaya, and vegetarian beans and rice. Dine to live jazz provided by Joe Foglia and his friend Aiden.

Have a talent you'd like to share for the crowd? Sign up to perform in the show! Send a note to master of ceremonies, Bill Coye at ([wcoye1@gmail.com](mailto:wcoye1@gmail.com)), to be added to the talent roster.

Want to come early (4 p.m.) to help flip pancakes? Email Elizabeth Altman at ([ebugaltman@gmail.com](mailto:ebugaltman@gmail.com)). We hope to see you there!



### Ash Wednesday March 6- 6-7 p.m.

Drop-In Communion & Imposition of Ashes in the worship space.

A time of personal reflection. Doug will be there to greet you with passages for meditation.



### Newcomers Get-Acquainted Potluck - March 16

UPUCC newcomers, new members and their children are invited to the second annual St. Patrick's Get-Acquainted Potluck on Saturday, March 16, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Join us for food, fellowship, *green* beer (if you're so inclined) and answers to your questions about UPUCC and our church community.

Children are welcome and child care and fun activities will be provided.

Questions? Contact Gary Sanders [sandersgary@gmail.com](mailto:sandersgary@gmail.com)



***It has been a tradition at UPUCC*** to host a meal packing event each spring. Our 2019 Rise Against Hunger Event marks our 11th year to hold this family-friendly project. Last year we crossed the 100,000 meal packaged mark! Our 2019 event will be held on Sunday, March 31 immediately after worship.

For set up, the meal packing and clean up, 50-60 volunteers will be needed. We hope to cross the 116,000 total meals packed mark this year - can you help? Please join us as a volunteer, donate, and/or share the donation link with friends, family, coworkers, employers, social networks, etc. For information about the event as well as the link to sign up as a volunteer or donate, please visit:

<https://www.riseagainsthunger.org/>

### **More 'Marching'** **Doug explains...**

... a special March Worship Series on page two.

### **Also...**

... see page four for info on two Book Studies (one daytime, one evening!)

## Clarity about UPUCC: Considering Our Covenant

In last month's newsletter I mentioned the website [churchclarity.org](http://churchclarity.org). 'Churchclarity' makes clear a church's stance on women in leadership and the LGBTQ community. The site is necessary because many churches pose as affirming and welcoming to all, but full equality is not truly extended. This lack of clarity can be extremely hurtful to persons who are welcomed and embraced initially but eventually treated as second-class as they move further into the community.



To help persons avoid this harmful disconnect, 'churchclarity' rates churches from "Clear: Non-Affirming" to "Clear: Affirming" based on the information provided on the churches website. An even higher affirming score ("Verified: Affirming") is attainable through a survey and evaluation by the site's reviewers.

Recently, I filled out the survey to seek the "Verified: Clear" scoring for our community. Here are a few of the questions asked:

- Will your church currently officiate a wedding for LGBTQ+ people?
- Will your church currently ordain LGBTQ+ people?
- Are women currently permitted to preach in the primary church service?
- Are women currently permitted to be ordained (or recommended for ordination)?
- Are women currently permitted to serve as elders, board members, or be a part of other governing bodies of the church?

I read these simple questions and thought to myself... ***"Is it possible that such questions can still be asked in 2019?!!"***

(Unfortunately, I know the answer to that question as well.)

Almost 20 years ago (*exactly* 20 this October) this congregation launched specifically as a progressive community of faith. Our stance to fully include women and the LGBT community was clear... but what other 'progressive stances' did we declare?

Those statements are in the UPUCC Covenant we collectively wrote and invited each other to sign.

...and to this day, we ask one question of persons as we welcome them into our fellowship, not as members, but as Covenant Partners: "Do you affirm this Covenant as your own?"

When they (when YOU!) say 'yes' and sign the same Covenant Book that we've invited people to sign from the beginning, we are inviting each other into a relationship. Together, we will attempt to further embody these words... these 'stances.' We pledge to further 'live out' the implications of this aspirational covenant. ([link here](#))

On the Sundays in March, in conjunction with our Senior High Youth exploring what it means to be a Covenant Partner, our worship themes will focus on aspects of "Considering Our Covenant."

I hope you'll explore and ponder with me some of the implications of our collective public stance!

"Beckoned to the place of belonging" *with you!*

*On the Sundays in March, Doug will explore:*

March 3	"The Mystery That We Name 'God'"
10	"How the Bible Is Not THE Word of God"
17	"This Community as a Safe Haven for All"
24	"Pro-Creation"
31	"Always... the Sacred Journey"

# youth

## Youth March Schedule

### March 3

9:30-10:15 am High School Youth:  
Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon

12:00-2:30 pm

All Youth: Frankie's Fun Park (Cost: \$15)  
Pack a lunch and carpool; pickup at UPUCC at 2:30 pm

### March 10

9:30-10:15 am High School Youth:  
Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon

11:30 am-1:30 pm Youth Group

### March 17

9:30-10:15 am High School Youth:  
Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon

11:30 am-1:30 pm Youth Group

### March 24

9:30-10:15 am High School Youth:  
Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon

11:30 am-1:30 pm Youth Group

### March 31

10:30-11:30 am Youth help with Children's Church

1:30 am-1:30 pm Youth Group



*Youth enjoy skating and game playing activities.*



# children

## A March Full of Family Activities!

**March 5-** Fat Tuesday Meal and Talent Show (Tuesday evening at 5:30 p.m.)

**March 16-** New Families Get Acquainted Potluck (Saturday evening 5:30 p.m.)

**March 31-** Rise Against Hunger (meal packing event after church-nursery provided, meal provided)

## Looking Ahead:

**April 21-** Not-your-typical Easter Egg Hunt follows Worship

**May 31-June 1-** Children's Church Camp (a Friday evening family meal and activities followed by Saturday morning 'camp.' (PreK-Youth)



*Fun in our Children's Church Classrooms  
(L-R): Nursery, Young Children's Room,  
Lower Elementary Room.*

# adult education

## March Forums – *Childcare is provided in the nursery.*

March 3 - 9:30 a.m. Lent: What is it, why do we do it, and what are some customs and practices for today's progressive Christian? The session will include a brief overview followed by discussion. Facilitated by Joanne Kennedy Frazer

March 10 - following worship. Join our Stewardship & Finance Committee for a brief conversation and activity to help us finalize our proposal to move ahead with financial plans for the future of UPUCC. More details on page six.

March 17 - 9:30 a.m. Why Celebrate St. Patrick? For St. Patrick's Day we will review the story of the saint who was crucial to bringing Christianity to Ireland and organizing the church there. In addition, we may celebrate Irish contributions to Christian practice and spirituality. *Sorry, no green beer will be served.* David VandeVusse facilitates discussion.

March 24 - 9:30 a.m. Faith Journey- Covenant Partner and Moderator-Elect Bridget-Blinn Spears shares her personal faith journey.

March 31 - No forum will be held due to Rise Against Hunger Event happening after worship.

## Lenten Mid-Week Daytime Book Study

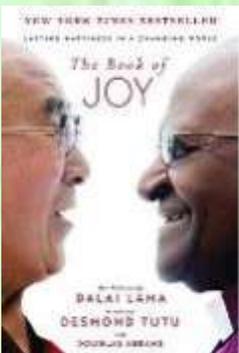
For those who are available middle of the day on Mondays (We finally have a critical mass of such folk here!), Doug is offering a four week delve into the much acclaimed:

### *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*

In April 2015, Archbishop Desmond Tutu spent a week together with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in celebration of the Dalai Lama's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. A time of reflection and thoughtfulness, the two spiritual giants intentionally pondered the question: "How do we find joy in the face of life's inevitable suffering?"

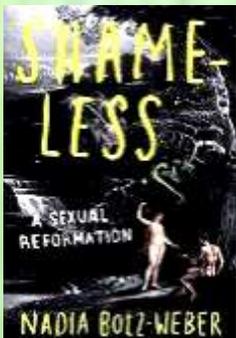
Grab a copy of the book from the web or a local bookstore. Then pack a sandwich and come at 11:30 Mondays, March 25, April 1, 8 and 15. In the library.

Questions?- Contact Doug at [doug@upucc.org](mailto:doug@upucc.org).



## Upcoming Evening Book Study

Bridget Blinn-Spears leads a book study on Nadia Bolz-Weber's recent release, *Shameless: A Sexual Reformation*. "Raw, intimate, and timely, Nadia Bolz-Weber's latest book offers a full-blown overhaul of our harmful and antiquated ideas about sex, gender, and our bodies." (description found on Amazon) Dates and times to be determined. Contact Bridget with questions [babspears@gmail.com](mailto:babspears@gmail.com)



# faith in action

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

Bob Phillips of Common Cause NC presented on gerrymandering at the February 3 Forum and reported progress is being made toward non-partisan districting. For example, five states passed ballot initiatives requiring districting reform. Also, court cases are working their way to the Supreme Court – including North Carolina (Republican gerrymandering) and Maryland (Democrat gerrymandering) – and results will be in late June. The best possible outcome would be for SCOTUS to rule that partisan gerrymandering is unconstitutional (like racial gerrymandering).

Meanwhile, the NC Supreme Court will hear a case that Republicans illegally changed districts in 2016. Hope is high, because there are five Democrats and two Republicans on that court. Best outcome would be a requirement for new maps for 2020 election. (This case cannot be appealed to Federal Courts, because it is an NC Constitution issue.) NC General Assembly session has just begun for the year, and redistricting reform bills will be introduced. In the past, this kind of bill was “killed” by sending them to a committee that never acts (the “graveyard” for the bills the leadership opposes). In an effort to get these bills discussed and voted on, Common Cause is planning a Lobby Day April 23rd. The Advocacy Task Force will be organizing UPUCC folks to participate in that Lobby Day and pressure the General Assembly to consider the bills and vote. We hope you will join us. Details to come.

*-Submitted by Gary Welsh*

## **One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering in March**



One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God’s message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Who participates in One Great Hour of Sharing?

Several Christian denominations - *American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and Church World Service* work together to develop common promotional materials thereby sharing ideas, costs, and a commitment to faithful service. Each denomination receives and manages its respective OGHS offering.



***Faith In Action (Sanctuary Needs) continues on page 12 ...***

***-Demonstrate our concern for neighbor through service and prophetic voice;***

# stewardship & finance

## March 10 Sharing Ideas for the Future of UPUCC

Dear Covenant Partners,  
Our pledge campaign and budgeting process is behind us. It was a difficult conversation at times, and I know from conversations with many of you, that you would like to see us change the game and make an effort to change our financial situation so that these budget conversations aren't so difficult.

We have also been talking about a capital campaign over the past year. We have spent time visioning and gathering our thoughts on what a capital campaign would strive to achieve. We must fix our roof and replace part of our HVAC. That is (as uninspiring as it is) non-negotiable. We have also explored ideas such as a solar roof, garden space, paying down the mortgage, and expanding into the back area to gain space for youth, choir, and community activities.

How do we connect these two things? Do projects that reduce our operating and maintenance expenses rise to the surface? How much capital would we need to invest to make our budget conversations less challenging.

Join us after worship on March 10 for a brief conversation and activity to help us finalize our goals for a capital campaign. We would like to hear from you about what you would like to accomplish with a capital campaign; what inspires you. We will talk about the different projects, their pros and cons, and how these projects can help us change the budgeting game.

Thanks,  
Mark Stevens, S&F Chair

### Tax Filing Tips

Even though December 31 has passed, there are still ways to lower one's 2018 income tax bill. Two of these are available until April 15, 2019. They are:

Contribute to a Health Savings Account  
and  
Contribute to an IRA

For details, go to:

[www.kiplinger.com/links/taxguide](http://www.kiplinger.com/links/taxguide)

This links you to a Kiplinger Personal Finance Magazine website and you will find the details at the bottom of the article. (Used with permission for Kiplinger Personal Finance magazine)

-Gary Welsh, UPUCC Treasurer

### UPUCC Financial Update

	January	YTD
Income:	\$28,057	\$28,057
Expenses:	\$26,518	\$26,518
Net:	\$1,539	\$1,539

Notes:

*Upcoming Expenses of Note (large expenditures that will be incurred in the next 30-60 days)*

- \$878.90 – Fire alarm system work required as a result of annual Fire Marshall Inspection
- \$916.33 – Repairs to the Men's Bathroom
- January Giving includes \$3780 from prepaid pledges (2019 pledges paid in 2018)

***Share freely of our wealth and resources;***

***-Recognize our identity as global citizens, intimately tied to and  
partnered with all of God's children in every land;***

## our wider community



### Islamic Association Annual Open House March 9th

The Islamic Association of Raleigh is hosting its Annual Open House on Saturday, March 9th from 11am to 3pm, featuring a keynote address by Imam Mohammed Abu Taleb. Come learn about your fellow American Muslims, observe them at prayer and sample culinary treats from around the Islamic world.

Please refer to this link below for the detailed program, timings and registration:

<https://raleighmasjid.org/news/announcements/2019/02/iar-annual-open-house-on-march.html>

### Family/Friends Night Out for Robert's Ramblers

On Wednesday, March 27, take a night off from cooking and come to [Sawmill Tap Room](#) between 5:30-7:30 p.m. The restaurant will donate 10% of all receipts (dine-in and take-out) marked for [Robert's Ramblers](#), the Schurtman family's [Take Steps for Crohn's & Colitis team](#). Enjoy a meal of casual dining and don't forget to write "Robert's Ramblers" on your receipt. Hope to see you there!



### ***Act Fast to Join Guatemala Trip!***

In 2016, a group of UPUCC members traveled to a maternal health clinic in Guatemala, where they assisted in the clinic, doing construction and going out into the community to assist with well baby/child medical checkups. This August, a UPUCC group will join again with Curamericas in this endeavor!

- Travel Dates - August 3-13, 2019
- Next Meeting - Sunday, April 7 following worship

Contact for more information:

Paul Foglia [phf@nc.rr.com](mailto:phf@nc.rr.com)

Jane Thibodeau [jthibodeau@curamericas.org](mailto:jthibodeau@curamericas.org)

<https://www.curamericas.org/>

*Participants thus far:*

*Neil Hall*

*Lisa and Meagan Hoskins*

*Paul and Joseph Foglia*

*Peter van Dorsten*

# we love our sunday volunteers

## March 3

Altar Prep: Eleanor Smith  
Communion Prep: Leslie Heavey  
Coffee Set-Up: Miles & Julie Schumacher  
Greeters: Ashley and Vanessa Montague  
Ushers: Jayme & Chris Abram  
Sound System: Chris Abram  
Auditor: Chris Ousley  
Assistant Treasurer: Sue Hathaway  
Clean-Team: Edward McFarland, Mark & Melanie Stevens,  
Linda Hébert, Jessica & Shawn Holmes

## March 10

Altar Prep: Leslie Heavey  
Coffee Set-Up: Elaina & Robert Richardson  
Greeters: **TBD**  
Ushers: **TBD**  
Sound System: **TBD**  
Auditor: Leslie Heavey  
Assistant Treasurer: Lee Harrison  
Clean-Team: Mary Pat Peters, Eliseo Jimenez, Vickie Teal,  
Elaina & Robert Richardson

## March 17

Altar Prep: Eleanor Smith  
Coffee Set-Up: Lori Del Negro & Roger Sommer  
Greeters: Ada & Colin McKerrell  
Ushers: **TBD**  
Sound System: Nevin Fouts  
Auditor: Chris Ousley  
Assistant Treasurer: Dan Harrell  
Clean-Team: Tim Champion & Dan Harrell,  
Chris Ousley, Ada & Colin McKerrell

***One can easily see  
by the **TBD's**,  
we are constantly seeking  
gifts of time on Sunday mornings.  
Link to sign ups [HERE](#).  
Instructions provided.  
Thanks for considering!***

## March 24

Altar Prep: Michael Lester  
Coffee Set-Up: **TBD**  
Greeters: **TBD**  
Ushers: Sue Hathaway & Laura Duval  
Sound System: Peter van Dorsten  
Auditor: Gwen Vass  
Assistant Treasurer: Lee Harrison  
Clean-Team: Nevin & Carol Fouts, Scott Pope,  
Doug Long & Janice Odom

## March 31

Altar Prep: Michael Lester  
Coffee Set-Up: **TBD**  
Greeters: **TBD**  
Ushers: **TBD**  
Sound System: Peter van Dorsten  
Auditor: **TBD**  
Assistant Treasurer: Dan Harrell  
Clean-Team: Tim Champion & Dan Harrell,  
Chris Ousley, Ada & Colin  
McKerrell

***-Call forth and nurture our individual and collective creative gifts;  
-Delight in humor and, through joyous celebration, savor the  
goodness of life.***

# all in the family

## New Covenant Partners



### ***Joining UPUCC on February 24:***

*Watch for more about our new  
Covenant Partners in an  
upcoming newsletter!*



*Tina & Bill Bingham*



*Nicole Olivieri & Jeff Poupart*



*Michele Van Note*

***Beckoned to this place of belonging...***

# upucc march calendar

Sat.	Mar. 2	9:30 a.m.	Yoga with Ellen Beidler in the worship space.
Sun.	Mar. 3	9:00 a.m.	UPUCC Financial Future Task Force meets in the large atrium conference room.
		9:30 a.m.	Forum: Lent- What is it? Joanne Kennedy Frazer facilitating in the library. See page four.
		9:30 a.m.	High School Youth-Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon.
		10:30 a.m.	<b>Worship &amp; Communion: "The Mystery That We Name 'God,'" Doug Long preaching.</b>
		11:30 a.m.	Youth Group meets.
		Following worship	Newcomers & Inquirers Session in the library.
		Following worship	UPUCC Advocacy Task Force meets in the atrium conference room.
Tues.	Mar. 5	9:30 a.m.	Creativity Group meets in the library.
		5:30 p.m.	Fat Tuesday Event in the worship space. See page one.
Wed.	Mar. 6	3:00 p.m.	Creativity Group to Healing Transitions.
		6:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Observance. See page one.
		6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group meets in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sat.	Mar. 9	10:00 a.m.	Meditation Group meets in the library.
Sun.	Mar. 10	2:00 a.m.	Daylight Saving Time begins. Clocks move forward one hour.
		9:30 a.m.	Committee Meeting Time. Childcare provided in the nursery.
		9:30 a.m.	High School Youth- Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon.
		10:30 a.m.	<b>Worship: "How the Bible Is Not 'THE Word of God,'" Doug Long preaching.</b>
		Following worship	Forum: S&F lead a discussion of UPUCC Future & Finance. See page six.
Wed.	Mar. 13	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group meets in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sat.	Mar. 16	9:30 a.m.	Yoga with Ellen Beidler in the worship space.
		2:00 p.m.	Sanctuary Host Training in the library. See page 12.
		5:00 p.m.	<b>Newcomer Get Acquainted Potluck at UPUCC. See page one.</b>
Sun.	Mar. 17	9:30 a.m.	Forum: Why Celebrate St. Patrick? See page four.
		9:30 a.m.	High School Youth-Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon.
		10:30 a.m.	<b>Worship: "This Community as a Safe Haven for All," Doug Long preaching.</b>
		11:30 a.m.	Youth meet.
			Worship & Music Committee meets in the library following worship.
Tues.	Mar. 19	9:30 a.m.	Creativity Group meets in the library.
Wed.	Mar. 20	6:15 p.m.	Music Literacy Group meets in the library.
		7:00 p.m.	UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Thurs.	Mar. 21	7:00 p.m.	Coordinating Council meets in the library.
		Midnight	Deadline for items to be included in UPUCC April Newsletter.

-Calendar continued on page 12 ...

*we yearn to further embody this holy love,  
shaping the future as partners with God,  
who dances and weeps with us along the way.*

## upucc march calendar *continued...*

Sun.	Mar. 24	9:30 a.m. Forum: Faith Journey- Bridget Blinn-Spears. See page four. 9:30 a.m. High School Youth- Covenant Conversation in the Dungeon. 10:30 a.m. Worship: "Pro-Creation," Doug Long preaching.
	Mar. 25	11:30 a.m. Book Study on <i>The Book of Joy</i> in the library. See page four.
Mon.		7:00 p.m. UPUCC Men's Group. Contact Reed Altman <a href="mailto:reedaltman@gmail.com">reedaltman@gmail.com</a> for details.
Wed.	Mar. 27	6:15 p.m. Music Literacy Group in the library. 7:00 p.m. UPUCC Choir rehearsal in the worship space.
Sun.	Mar. 31	10:30 a.m. Worship: "Always... the Sacred Journey," Doug Long preaching. OGHS Special Offering. See page five. Following worship Rise Against Hunger Event in the worship space. See page one.

## nominating

### **Nominations Reminder- *Wanna Plug Into A Committee?***

Your UPUCC Nominations Committee is busy compiling *great* leadership for our 2019-2020 committee year (Officers and Committees are elected at our Spring Congregational Meeting at the end of April. Terms officially begin May 1.)

We are looking for all interested Covenant Partners who have a passion for our collective work. Committee descriptions can be found here ([Link](#)).

If you have any interest, contact one of our Nominators soon!

Bridget Blinn-Spears [babspears@gmail.com](mailto:babspears@gmail.com) Mary Nations [mary.nations@gmail.com](mailto:mary.nations@gmail.com)  
Peg Arcari [peg@upucc.org](mailto:peg@upucc.org) Doug Long [doug@upucc.org](mailto:doug@upucc.org)

## faith in action *continued...*

### **Next Sanctuary Host Training Opportunity**



We will be having another host training on Saturday, March 16 from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the church library. If you know of anyone who is interested in being a sanctuary host and they haven't been trained, please pass along this link:

[Sanctuary Host Training Signup link](#)

We also are in need of more people willing to drive to Greensboro Friday afternoons occasionally to pick up the Jimenez children. (This enables them to spend an additional day with Eliseo while Gabriela works.)

If you'd like to sign up or need more information, contact Julie Schumacher. ([schumachermjs@gmail.com](mailto:schumachermjs@gmail.com))