(Limited*) **In-Person Worship to Resume June 20th**

Normally things slow down in summer but this year we will clearly break that pattern as some of us are able to return safely to in-person worship beginning Sunday, June 20th.

As an unabashedly liberal group, in this instance we will move more conservatively, asking all present to wear masks and socially distance while indoors. The service (and future worship services) will be live-streamed to allow all to participate. (For the time being, our regular Zoom worship link will be used.)

While many of us are fully vaccinated, others, including all children, have not yet had that opportunity. Children are certainly welcome, but no special children’s classes or inside gatherings in worship will be offered until further notice. (Watch for details as possible outside children’s gatherings are planned.)

On June 20th, weather permitting, we ask all to gather in the front parking area prior to and following worship for any “socializing” as we all ease back into our life together.

Don your masks and ‘join in’ for our joyful steps toward ‘normalcy’!

* Limited? Though we do not anticipate more persons in attendance than our space can safely accommodate, the length of our worship may be shortened, some aspects may occur outdoors, and singing may be recorded instead of sung live…but we’ll come together safely with enthusiasm and creativity!

**The Garden That Love Conceived** (...is now fully underway)

"Breaking ground for a new phase of life together"

Also featured in this Issue:
- Time-Sensitive Sweat Equity Opportunities p. 2 & 3
- Adult Ed (see new opportunity for Bible 101) p. 4 & 5
- Yard Sale Resounding Success p. 6
- Racial Justice/White Privilege Study p. 6
- UCC General Synod News (Virtual meeting offers access to all) p. 7
- JTP Upcoming Performances & Summer Camp! p. 8
First Fruits: The Garden “grows” a Playground
(For sweat equity opportunities... follow the red font!)

By now you’ve seen photos of the emerging AV platform and the Garden Space underway. The pandemic “shut down” has been anything but a cessation of activity, given all the projects in process at 8208! …and of course none would be possible without key volunteers stepping forward (not to mention hammering and sawing forward as well!).

…Speaking of, great thanks to our Stewardship and Finance Committee for their diligent handling of the “Count on Me” Capital Funds that not only covered all planned projects (a new roof, a solar roof, HVAC upgrades in the worship space, LED lighting... just to name some!!) but the Count on Me monies were also stretched through careful expenditures to assist with two capital projects we could not foresee pre-pandemic. Both the AV platform and the significant additional expense of decking (due to spiking lumber costs) will be covered from the “Count on Me” Funds... and still with a healthy balance to go toward mortgage reduction as promised. (Go S&F!)

...AND, through good luck, more volunteers, and some cobbled together funding, a further project of the master landscape plan has happily evolved as well. Instead of hauling away much of the dirt from the future garden area, this soil has provided a level playground space for our children. (You can see the area for an eventual playground across the parking lot in the adjacent photo.)

What is not as visible in the photo is the significant amount of downed saplings, limbs, brush and tree debris surrounding the future play area. In short, it needs to be cleared before next steps can be taken to create a safe play space... and considering that we would like to provide the opportunity to be together outside to our children sooner than later, time’s a wastin.’

SO... this coming Friday afternoon and Saturday morning we could use your help in dragging brush to a rented chipper and clearing/cleaning the area. Think of our children!! (Fri. June 4, 4 pm–7 pm and Sat. June 5, 9 am-1 pm.)

If that doesn’t suit your fancy, Peter van Dorsten and Eliseo would be delighted to incorporate some help with the inside platform almost anytime. (Just shoot Peter a note at pv2049@gmail.com)

It’s all coming together… thanks to many hands, all working together. Working with you-

Richard Frazer, Don Alderman and Scott Andrews ‘re-cabling’ for the new AV stage.
Seeking Volunteers for Clean Teams!

In an effort to keep our maintenance costs low, UPUCC volunteers clean our building. We hope to have our teams cleaning by late August following a professional deep clean of the facility. Volunteer cleaning does not include the atrium bathrooms!

Four teams of volunteers (each team cleans once/month) do a light cleaning (vacuum/dusting) of our space each week. Teams coordinate their day of the week to clean. Tasks are clearly outlined, and teams decide together which tasks each person will do. Teams are notified of any events to work around (e.g. wedding, funeral, theater performance, etc.)

Cleaning commitment—up to 2 hours per month. We have the following openings:

- Team 1 cleans before the 1st Sunday of each month plus 5th week of October: 2 openings
- Team 2 cleans before the 2nd Sunday of the month plus 5th week of January: 5 openings
- Team 3 cleans before the 3rd Sunday of the month plus 5th week of May: 3 openings
- Team 4 cleans before the 4th Sunday of the month plus 5th week of July: 4 openings

Don't delay! Reserve your spot today! Contact Rebecca van Dorsten @ rebeccalvandorsten@gmail.com.

Now is the Time!

Children’s Committee met this week with some members of the Garden Task Force to survey the area filled in for our the first phase of our future playground (see page 2). Discussion focused on erosion prevention and safety measures to ensure a positive experience for all.

Also, many thanks to all who came to our Children’s Church Gathering after worship last month! Special thanks to Lisa Hoskins (and foster kittens Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato!) and to Heather Frink’s family (and new foster pups yet-to-be-named for various bugs!).

June Youth Schedule

Sunday - June 6  2-3 pm
Youth Outing to Howling Cow at NC State: Ice Cream & Games

Sunday - June 27  5-6 pm
Youth Group

Questions? Contact Jonathan jemandkam0520@gmail.com
 Forums Sunday 9 am

June 6th – As the Creation Care team encourages us to reevaluate our cultural relationships with food (production and disposal), let’s “brew up” a Forum where we discuss our religious relationships with food and food practices. Brian Spears leads our discussion, and reading materials are attached here.

June 13th - Regenerating: Soil, Compost, & Waste (Peter van Dorsten) How does belonging to the earth – being made from it and called to be protectors of its flourishing – inform how we think about soil, compost, and waste?

June 20th – Creation Care Proposed Action Plan will be shared by the Creation Care Team as to how we as a congregation can better care for our planet, led by Peter van Dorsten.

June 27th – Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life – In 2008 Karen Armstrong and leading thinkers from a variety of religious faiths developed the Charter for Compassion, launched in 60 different locations throughout the world. She followed this work with her best-selling book, Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life. Kathy Dobbs will share highlights from this book.

 Progressive Bible Study Monday 7 pm: History, the Bible and You

Beginning in June, we’ll be trying out a new curriculum during our Monday night Progressive Bible Study (7 pm), called History, the Bible and You. As the foundational text of our faith, the Bible is an important piece of our journey. But as our UPUCC Covenant says, we seek to:

- Search the scriptures with open-minded thoughtfulness; taking the Bible seriously while knowing it cannot always be taken literally;

Using materials and the approach outlined in the History in the Bible podcast from Garry Stevens (https://www.historyinthebible.com/), we’ll look at some of the latest research into the Biblical texts and the archaeology behind them. In addition to considering historical / archaeological findings and critical research from biblical and literary scholars, we’ll take the time to discuss how we can make scripture meaningful to us in our own lives today (and which parts of scripture are NOT meaningful to us personally).

Our Monday night sessions offer the opportunity to explore the Bible with open minds and open discussions. Join us as we begin a new ground floor approach!

June 7 – What is the Bible?

Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and Church of the East all have different versions of the Bible, with dissimilar books, based on different ancient texts. Before diving into our study of the History, the Bible and You, we’ll start with a focus on the Tanakh (AKA for some, the Old Testament). We’ll explore how various groups decided what to include as their sacred texts, and go over some lesser known Bibles. As we explore how this topic is relevant to us today, we’ll discuss, among other things:

- The impact of naming something an “old” testament
- Diversity of belief & pluralism, even when starting from the same place
- How does the diversity of books considered “sacred” impact our views on how the Bible should be viewed?
- If you were to create your own canon of sacred texts, what would that include?

June 14 – Early Biblical Criticism & Archaeology / The Names of God

When did scholars start thinking critically about the Bible? And when did archaeologists start digging in the

continued on page 5...
Palestinian dirt, and why? The finds at the ancient city of Ugarit in Syria provided us with our knowledge of the religion of Canaan, the land conquered by the Israelites. Some of this religion, such as the god El and the monsters Leviathan and Behemoth found their way into the ancient religion of Israel and into the Bible. We’ll also review the most common names of God found in the Bible (Yahweh, El, Elohim, Adonai), and what they mean.

As we explore how this topic is relevant to us today, we’ll discuss, among other things:

- What does a critical study of the Bible do for our individual faith?
- How can we balance literary history and tradition with archaeological finds?
- How does our environment and surrounding culture influence our faith today?
- What names do we give God, or do we name God at all?

June 21 – Canaan of the Patriarchs

A history of the Middle East in the Bronze Age sets the background for the sessions that follow. (This session will be a bit heavy on history.) Understanding the land of the patriarchs can help us better relate to the stories that follow. We’ll trace the story of Canaan as it was uncovered, and then reinterpreted, by archaeologists from the 1930s to the present day. We’ll also review the greatest catastrophe of antiquity, the Bronze Age Collapse, and how scholars construct chronologies. Plus, we’ll hear about a great leader who was rescued from a river in a floating basket (and it wasn’t Moses).

As we explore how this topic is relevant to us today, we’ll discuss, among other things:

- What would it be like to live in Palestine in the Bronze Age and NOT be one of the super powers of the time?
- What does a cosmopolitan environment do for traditions and faith?
- What could happen when you look to use archaeology to validate biblical history?

How does the world around us shape our own stories and faith?

June 28 – Writing the Pentateuch

Before digging into the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Bible), we’ll explore some theories about who may have been the author. (Hint...it’s probably not Moses.) Work by scholars from the late 19th century had established that multiple sources lay behind the Pentateuch. Although questioned in the past 20 years, the theory known as the Documentary Hypothesis is still accounted a firm starting place for any sort of examination of the text of the Pentateuch. They came to be known by letters: J, E, P, and D. We also find out why the Bible is divided into chapters and verses.

As we explore how this topic is relevant to us today, we’ll discuss, among other things:

- Does a story need to have one author? What do different viewpoints add or subtract for you?
- How does the story of who we are and what we believe change over time, and how do we tell it? How would different people tell your story?

What are the pros & cons of portraying God with human characteristics? As a cosmic force?

COMING IN JULY... Creation Stories, Tales of the Flood, and an Introduction to Abram/Abraham

Additional Adult Ed Offerings

Tuesday 6 pm Book Group kdobbs001@nc.rr.com
Thursday 7:30 pm Brew Theology raleighdurham-brewtheology@gmail.com (2nd & 4th Thursdays)
Saturday 10 am babspears@gmail.com (first Saturday of each month)

Check the UPUCC Website for schedule and some links: https://www.upucc.org/newscalendar/calendar
White Privilege: Let’s Talk
This 6-part online discussion series is hosted by a partnership between the National Council of Churches and Grace & Race Ministries and will take place online on Wednesdays in June from 7:00-8:30 pm, with a sixth session to be scheduled by participants. The link to sign up for the full 6-part discussion is here: https://graceandrace.org/2021/05/white-privilege-series-announcement/
For those who would like more information, the introduction to this series is offered as a free webinar that can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoRXw5TgSao&t=1s

Racial Justice Work(ing) Group 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7 pm
All are welcome to join as this group continues working on educating themselves and the congregation on issues of racial justice, providing specific anti-racist actions, support and accountability, and establishing relationships with the Black community based on trust.
For more details, please contact Renate Andrews rma8805@gmail.com

Recent Yard Sale A Resounding Success
Many thanks to all who donated, hauled, set up and broke down our yard sale last month (with very special thanks to Linda Hébert for overseeing it all!)
Proceeds from the sale are designated for Eliseo and exceeded $3000 plus the donation of a 2008 Prius! (Eliseo also gleaned some excellent furniture for his next living space.)

stewardship & finance

Update from Stewardship & Finance
Our finances continue to look stable so far this year. In fact, the operating fund balance is a little higher than it was at the same time last year ($66,752 in April 2021 versus $53,947 in April 2020). Our expenses have been comparable to last year, but our income is a little higher.
-Christy Tucker, Co-chair of Stewardship & Finance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April YTD Results</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Offerings</td>
<td>$133,539</td>
<td>$126,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>$135,215</td>
<td>$127,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$100,434</td>
<td>$100,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Income</td>
<td>$34,781</td>
<td>$27,355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
all in the family

Congratulations, UPUCC High School Graduates!

Erin Andrews  Meagan Hoskins
Sydney Brainard  Jacob Springle
Joseph Foglia  Cody Welch
Katie Hasse  Marcel Zhang

Planning is underway to celebrate these graduates soon.
Look for photos from the event in the July newsletter!

worship & music

UPUCC Summer Worship Music

Every summer we welcome all who wish to share their musical talents with us on Sunday mornings. We would love to fill up every Sunday with special music! Please contact Sheila Alderman sheila@upucc.org if you would like to sing or play one Sunday in June, July, or August! The more the merrier! All instruments and voices are welcome!

in our wider community

UCC General Synod Keynote Speaker

Valarie Kaur is a social justice activist who leads campaigns for civil and human rights. When a Sikh family friend was the first person murdered in a hate crime after 9/11, she made her first film on hate violence in America. Since then, her story-based advocacy has helped win policy change on hate crimes, racial profiling, immigration detention, solitary confinement, marriage equality, and Internet freedom.

Since 1957, when the first “uniting” General Synod gathered in 1957 in Cleveland, Ohio, to the meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2019, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ has faithfully convened a meeting every two years in physical locations throughout the United States.

The 2021 General Synod of the United Church of Christ, meeting July 11-18, will consider 11 resolutions and several bylaw changes.

Register today and join us for General Synod 33 – a fully virtual event. Registration provides you access to all aspects of General Synod, including worship, optional events, business, over 50 workshops, exhibit hall, keynote speakers and much more.

General Synod events will occur in the later half of the day to afford all an increased ability to engage. Registration is more affordable this year than it’s ever been ($100/visitor).

Link to register here.
Opening This Week! Finding My Voice

“Lee Galbreath takes [the audience] on a moving, hilarious rollercoaster ride that led her to become an ‘accidental’ opera singer. Her religious upbringing, insecurities, body image, and perfectionism, coupled with societal pressures facing female artists, left her unable to sing a note for two years.

A raw, brave, and winding path ultimately led her back to the stage in this triumphant one-woman tour de force of humor, honesty, and spectacular song...that Lee has, once again, found her voice.”

Call 919-264-7089, email thejusticetheaterproject@gmail.com or visit www.thejusticetheaterproject.org for ticket information.

Kids Camp! Story Theatre - “Around The World”
Summer 2021

- Weeks of July 12, 19, and 26 at Umstead Park United Church of Christ, 8208 Brownleigh Drive, Raleigh.
- Weeks of August 2 and 9 at the Emily K Center in Durham www.emilyk.org
- Enroll for 1 week, 2 weeks, or all weeks!

WEEK 1: Animal Tales - Favorite stories from the animal kingdom, including some of the best of Aesop’s fables.
WEEK 2: Stories of the World - Folktales from cultures all over the world.

- Camp culminates in a performance. At this time it will be live-streamed.
- Camp is limited to 25 students per week.
- Rising 2nd to Rising 9th Graders

For complete details: http://www.thejusticetheaterproject.org/summer-2021

This we know:

In our faithful sojourning
We do not walk alone. God is present with us.
We have not yet arrived. God continues to beckon.
We seek no destination. The sacred journey is our home.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>June Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Group. Contact Kathy <a href="mailto:kdobbs001@nc.rr.com">kdobbs001@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Racial Justice Working Group. Contact <a href="mailto:rma8805@gmail.com">rma8805@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Covid Response Task Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>10 am</td>
<td>Meditation Group. See page 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Worship: Does the Bible Matter Anymore?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Following worship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pm</td>
<td>Advocacy Task Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>June 7</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Study - The Sum of Us. Contact <a href="mailto:rma8805@gmail.com">rma8805@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Progressive Bible Study. See page 4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Group. Contact Kathy <a href="mailto:kdobbs001@nc.rr.com">kdobbs001@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Brew Theology. Contact <a href="mailto:raleighdurhambrewtheology@gmail.com">raleighdurhambrewtheology@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Congregational Care Prayer Breakfast. Contact <a href="mailto:nfouts@nc.rr.com">nfouts@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Forum: Regenerating Soil, Compost, &amp; Waste. See page 4; Stewardship &amp; Finance Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Worship: Testing the Waters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Following worship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fellowship, Personnel, and Worship &amp; Music Committees meet respectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>June 14</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Progressive Bible Study. See page 4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Group. Contact Kathy <a href="mailto:kdobbs001@nc.rr.com">kdobbs001@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Covid Response Task Force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Worship: The Promised Land. See page 1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>June 21</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Study - The Sum of Us. Contact <a href="mailto:rma8805@gmail.com">rma8805@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Progressive Bible Study. See page 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>June 22</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Group. Contact Kathy <a href="mailto:kdobbs001@nc.rr.com">kdobbs001@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>June 24</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Brew Theology. Contact <a href="mailto:raleighdurhambrewtheology@gmail.com">raleighdurhambrewtheology@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>June 26</td>
<td>9 am</td>
<td>Congregational Care Prayer Breakfast. Contact <a href="mailto:nfouts@nc.rr.com">nfouts@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>Children’s Committee meets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td>Worship: A Letter to Amelia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>Youth Group. See page 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>June 28</td>
<td>7 pm</td>
<td>Progressive Bible Study. See page 5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>6 pm</td>
<td>Book Group. Contact Kathy <a href="mailto:kdobbs001@nc.rr.com">kdobbs001@nc.rr.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>