A Journal. September, 2017

Dear Rec Community,

I hope everyone knows by now, the Rec is entering a season of education and discernment regarding sanctuary. There are three main ways every member of our church community can participate in this time of learning and listening for the movement of God’s Spirit:

1) Make a personal commitment to educate yourself and become well-informed on the issues related to sanctuary. Links to important information have been and will be sent via email. Hard copies are available in the Narthex. Set aside some time to pour yourself a cup of coffee, sit down, and read through these offerings on this important issue of our time;

2) Attend the important presentations on Sunday, September 24, 3:00 – 4:30 PM. Rev. Julie Peeples, Greensboro UCC speaking on her congregation’s experience providing sanctuary; and Sunday, October 1, 2:00 – 3:30 PM – Dr. Hans Linnartz, Duke law professor (ret.) on immigration law and the legal aspects of providing sanctuary (summaries of these presentations will be available for those who missed them);

3) Be part of the cottage meetings to be held in October. Sign up sheets for times and locations will be available in the Narthex and via church email beginning September 17.

I am excited to see what God will do in and through us as we journey through this season of discernment. I urge you to be part of this process and to help your fellow Rec community members discover the way forward for our church on this crucial issue of our times.

Grace and Peace,
Mark
FALL POETRY READING
October 22, 5:00 PM

You’re invited to join us for our Rec Poetry Reading on Sunday, October 22 at 5:00 PM in the Parish House Chapel followed by supper together.

Poets old and young get your verses together and let’s do it again even more and better. All are invited even if you are not a writer. This is one of the one of the treasures of the Church of Reconciliation.

MANY WAYS TO PRAY

You are cordially invited to join us for Wednesday Evening Prayer Re-imagined, as we explore Many Ways to Pray. Join us the first Wednesday each month, from 7:00 to 7:45 (September 6). Nancy Corson Carter will be facilitating. Each gathering will be unique, with time for silence, for intercession and for learning a new prayer practice. We meet in the new Chapel in the Sanctuary. Everyone is welcome: Come as you are, whenever you can.

Facilitators: Carol Eckerman, Nancy Corson Carter, Mark Davidson, and Allison Davidson

CIRCLES OF LIGHT TO START UP AGAIN IN THE FALL

This Fall we will be starting our fifth season of the Circles of Light. The Deacons would like to thank all those who participated in the Circles this year. For those not familiar with this program, the Circles of Light are small groups of 6-10 members who meet once a month as a way to get to know one another. Last year there were close to 100 members of the Rec who joined one of the twelve different Circles of Light. A review with those who were group leaders last year showed overall very positive support for these small groups as another way to build and maintain community within our church. Many leaders said they plan to continue serving as a host for their group. Others said they wanted to have the chance to join a different group. Based on that response, the Deacons want to extend an open invitation to any members who would like to lead a Circle in 2017/2018.

The Finance Committee is in need of additional volunteers to count the offering after Sunday services. Training will be provided and only elementary math skills are needed. If you would be willing to serve in this way, please contact Jim Spaeth at jimspaeth25@gmail.com.

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT EVENINGS AT THE REC

Tuesday, September 19, 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall, Jim Hynes, “Reading the Bible with René Girard” -- Jim is the director of Adult Ed at St. Thomas More Catholic Church, and will offer wisdom he has gleaned from Girard, one of the 20th century’s most creative religious thinkers. Everyone is welcome!

“LET’S DO THE NUMBERS…”

Each month, Session will report key financial data about our church’s budget.

June 2017 revenue: $27,687
Jan - June 2017 revenue: $192,747
June 2017 expenses: $27,963
Jan - June 2017 expenses: $190,760

The church’s regular monthly income comes from pledges, unpledged contributions, rental income, and an offset from the Hillsborough Presbyterian Church for their share in JoAnn’s pension and medical benefits.

If you have questions, please be in touch with John Rupp, Session Liaison to Finance Committee, or Finance Committee Chair Jim Spaeth.
The Christian Spiritual Journey
as Transformation
7:00 to 9:00 PM
Mondays, September 25 - November 13
Church of the Reconciliation Fellowship Hall


Using Margaret Thompson’s Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life, co-facilitators Dr. Heather Ferguson (Westminster Presbyterian Church) and Craig Smith (United Church of Chapel Hill) will join participants in exploring the common path that Christians throughout the ages have taken to seek and find the God who also seeks us. We’ll consider core spiritual practices such as prayer, journaling, deep listening, hospitality, and sacred reading of Scripture. The fee is $25.00, which includes the text and materials. (Scholarships are available.) The class is open to the community, so invite friends too.

A CALL FOR COORDINATORS FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

At our August meeting, the Deacons discussed how the church can do a better job of hosting and managing special events such as memorial services. To provide help at those times when such a service is needed, the Deacons have developed a set of guidelines that can be used for this purpose. Under the leadership of Meri-Li Douglas, who has directed a number of these services, and with the help of Pastor Mark, the Deacons now have a detailed blueprint for conducting these special programs.

The plan addresses all the details needed to host this type of service. A key part of this plan will be to have a pool of Rec members who are willing to serve as coordinators for a given service. Whenever there is a need, the Deacons would recruit one to two people for each occasion, from among the pool of those members who have volunteered to serve as a special service coordinator. Using the plan developed by the Deacons, these coordinators would then work with Mark and the family to plan and direct the service. Flexibility in your schedule that would allow you to attend a service during a weekday will be helpful. Please contact Craig DeBussey, (PH: 919-419-9970 email: cd56@mindspring.com) if you would be willing to be included in the pool of Rec members who can do this. There will be an informational meeting for coordinators to review the guidelines developed by the Deacons.

ORANGE COUNTY JUSTICE UNITED

Internal Assembly to Set a New Agenda at Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church on 1701 Jimmy Ed Road in Hurdle Mills on Sunday, September 10, 5:00 - 7:00 PM. Partial results of Listening Campaign (about ⅕ reporting). Top community concerns grouped by category, weighted by frequency mentioned.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE IN ORANGE COUNTY?

This summer Justice United leaders have engaged hundreds of people from Hurdle Mills to Chapel Hill to surface top community concerns for countywide action. Join us to vote for a new collective agenda to make Orange County a better place to live, work, and worship! Guests welcome, no media please. More information: ocjusticeunited.org/internalAssembly_for_a_new_agenda

PRESBYTERIAN INTERNATIONAL PEACEMAKER

Sponsored by the New Hope Presbytery Peacemaking Network: New Hope Presbytery welcomes The Rev. Douglas Baker, Peacemaker from Northern Ireland. The Reconciliation Peacemaking Community (RPC) invites the congregation to join us for a potluck dinner on Friday evening September 29, at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall to meet and learn from the Rev. Baker. There will be more details as Rev Baker’s itinerary is further defined.

--Wes Hare for RPC and chair of the New Hope Presbytery Peacemaking Network
On Transformation from Bron Skinner, Chair of Adult Education Committee

I have spent some time recently contemplating the meaning of transformation. As members of a community that alleges to be following the teachings of Jesus Christ I have come to the conclusion that we must explore with some seriousness what transformation might mean to each of us as individual members of the Body.

There is hardly a theological system in existence that does not in some way or other touch on the notion that the goal in believing and practicing a particular set of spiritual teachings is some kind of transformation. The dictionary definition of the verb, to transform, is

1. to change in form, appearance, or structure; metamorphose
2. to change in condition, nature, or character; convert
3. to change into another substance; transmute

While the definition remains ambiguous with regard to the positive or negative nature of the change, generally, in the context of spiritual endeavors we can assume that the direction of change is meant to be in a positive direction.

Acts, Chapter 9 relates the story of how Saul, a sworn enemy of the nascent body of followers of Christ, was converted to his most avid follower in a dramatic show of divine power to transform. Later in his own writings, now as the Apostle Paul, he reflects his conversion experience with a promise of similar change for those who might choose to follow Christ.

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV)

And then in Romans he challenges believers:

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2 ESV)

If I am brutally honest with myself, I fall short of the kind of transformation that is implied in such scripture. Yes, I have changed remarkably over a lifetime. Still when I consider whether I have made the kind of change that might come to mind when the word transformation is used in a spiritual sense, I am drawn up short. I am not even sure I know where being transformed might lead me. Do I have to change how I live my whole life? Do I give up all my worldly belongings and devote myself to care of the poor and homeless? Do I participate in every demonstration against injustice in the world? Do I feel called every moment of every day to seek communion with God?

I am left with many questions. The Adult Education Committee is going to give all of us who are interested and willing to consider the question a chance to grapple with this topic. What might spiritual transformation look like? What place might it have in your personal life? We are going to begin our fall Sunday session with the first three Sundays dedicated to exploring transformation as an integral part of realizing our Christian faith. Put the following Sunday dates for Adult Sunday on your calendar and bring your own examples of how you might have experienced transformation in your own lives to share.

September 10 – We will set the stage for conversations on transformation and its meaning to us as Christians.

September 17 and 24 – Each Sunday we plan to have two invited members of the congregation to share how transformation has, or has not, appeared as an important part of their spiritual journey.

All Sundays will be conducted with the goal of providing ample opportunity for all to participate and share. See you all at 9:45 on September 10. Enjoy the remainder of your summer.

Bennett Myers will be reading from his poetry book, "Across Time" on Sunday, October 1, at Quail Ridge Book Store in the North Hill Mall area in Raleigh.
A SEASON OF PEACE

An invitation from the PCUSA and our Reconciliation Peace Community

“So he came and proclaimed peace to those who were far off and peace to those who were near.” Ephesians 2:17

The letter to the Ephesians tells us that Jesus came to proclaim a peace that is universal. While the earthly ministry of Jesus happened in a specific age and place, the peace he shared is limited by neither time nor geography.

As followers of Christ, our call to work for peace begins in our own neighborhoods and extends to the ends of the earth. It is a demanding call, but it’s one that Presbyterians at all levels of the church are seeking to follow.

Next month we will be asked to give to the Peace & Global Witness Offering – one way we can be faithful to Christ’s call to pursue peace at home and around the world. Our gifts to this Offering will support peace efforts in South Sudan and work with Syrian refugees in Philadelphia and other areas around the globe. It will also support local efforts in our community.

As we prepare ourselves to participate in this Offering, the PCUSA has declared a four-week pilgrimage designed to deepen the pursuit of peace for congregations, small groups, families, and individuals. This season is a time of encouragement, challenge, inspiration and education. We are invited to define and deepen our calling as peacemakers.

Resources included in *A Season of Peace are:

Path of Peace Daily Reflections – subscribe and receive a daily reflection from September 3 – October 1.

Peace Cards – 3 sets of 30 cards which can be placed in a central location such as a kitchen table. They can be used anywhere and with anyone – meals, family gatherings, study groups to begin in-depth conversations. Use one card per day during A Season of Peace and let the conversations lead to new perspectives and practices for making peace.

Children’s Curriculum – Lessons from the Table is a five-session curriculum that focuses on the communion table.

Adult Bible Study – The Things that Make for Peace is a five-week study focusing on the inner and outer paths to peace as foundational to faithful discipleship.

Children’s Coloring Poster – This original artwork can be used as an individual coloring sheet or enlarged to poster size for a group coloring project during the weeks of A Season of Peace.

We are challenged in these times to begin to become the Peace Church which we hope/claim to be. Through this Season of Peace, we are invited to: Commit to the Gospel of Peace, Confess our Complicity, Reclaim Christ the Peacemaker, Practice New Peace Strategies, and Transform our Structures and Work for Peace.

Our Prayer: We pray for courage and wisdom to proclaim Christ’s peace in our neighborhoods and around the world. Give us strong voices and generous hearts, that we may stand with the Prince of Peace against violence and injustice. Let us join with Christ to work for a world of peace and plenty. Amen

* You may access these resources through: presbyterianmission.org/a season of peace 2017
SEPTEMBER RESPONSIBILITY SCHEDULE:
Worship at 11:00 AM on Sunday mornings

If you have a conflict with this schedule – please call others on the list and make a swap. Then inform the church office of these changes at 919-929-2127 or churchrec@churchrec.org. THANKS!

LITURGISTS
3rd Beth Bale
10th Ann Carr Adkins
17th Gene Johnson
24th Erin Masercola

OFFERING COUNTERS
3rd Sue Regier, Sandra burt
10th Lisa Anthony, Jim Spaeth
17th Raymond Farrow, David Robinson
24th Alex Gordon, Jim Spaeth

ELDER-ON-CALL
3rd Ann Loomis
10th John Rupp
17th Libby Johnson
24th Alex Gordon

CHANCEL ASSISTANTS
3rd Meri-Li Douglas
10th Nancy Gustaveson
17th Rose Crawford
24th Libby Johnson

GREETERS
3rd Gene Johnson
10th Shirley Brazda, Jane Hare
17th Ellen Davis, Patt Grandstaff
24th Ken and Sandy Milroy Jens

FLOWERS
3rd Paula Rogenes
10th Ann Gordon
17th Beth Welton
24th Alice Myers

SANCTUARY ASSISTANT
3rd Sandra Burt
10th Sue Regier
17th Patt Grandstaff
24th Gene Johnson

SOUND TECHNICIANS
3rd Kirby Snell
10th Michael Jokich
17th Anne Lutes
24th Anne Lutes

WORSHIP COORDINATOR
3rd Meri-Li Douglas
10th Sandra Burt
17th Michael Jokich
24th Anne Lutes

LOCK-UP
3rd Kirby Snell & Theo Jass
10th Gene Johnson
17th Bill Andrews
24th Bron Skinner & Patricia Sawin

CAREGIVERS
3rd Rose Crawford, Mary Cason
10th Marty Propst, Lisa Anthony
17th Rose Crawford, Jeannie Goguen
24th Ken and Mary Hoover

SIGNING CHECKS
3rd Paula Rogenes
10th Gene Johnson
17th Lucy Richardson
24th Raymond Farrow

MUSICIANS
3rd Dale Herman
10th Akiko Yamazaki Haywood
17th Dale Herman
24th Allen Wilcox

September 3rd
Volunteers: Moustapha, Randy Burnette

September 10th
Volunteers: Doris Murrell, Caleb Jones

September 17th
Volunteers: Jane Hare, Jeb Byerley

September 24th
Volunteers: Chris Lutes, Ike Bonin

October 1st
Volunteers: Sarah Stitsinger, Major Bonin

October 8th
Volunteers: Sue Gilbertson, Sandra Burt

October 15th
Volunteers: Molly Farrow, Ike Bonin

October 22nd
Volunteers: Margaret Barrett, Albert Carlson

October 29th
Volunteers: Doris Murrell, Caleb Jones

Land & Structures
On-Call for September
Ken Jens

Worship resumes at 11:00 AM!
Childcare Providers should be in their rooms by 10:45 AM
**Calendar for September 2017**

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<tr>
<th>SUN</th>
<th>MON</th>
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<th>WED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Join us on Sunday mornings for Sunday School at 9:45 AM and Worship at 11:00 AM followed by Community Fellowship at 12:15 PM</td>
<td>Office Closed for Labor Day</td>
<td>Many Ways to Pray 7:00 PM (PHC)</td>
<td>L &amp; S 7:00 PM (FH) Earth Care 7:00 PM (PHL)</td>
<td>Deadline for Weekly Rec Email is 10 AM on Friday</td>
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<td>9:45 AM Sunday School resumes! 11:00 AM Worship 3:15 PM Mennonites (SN/FH/EB)</td>
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<td>Deadline for Bulletin Announcements is 10 AM on Wednesday</td>
<td>Adult Ed. 6:30 PM (PHL) JPC 5:30 PM (Potluck at Hare’s)</td>
<td>Newsletter Deadline 10:00 AM</td>
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<td>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 3:15 PM Mennonites (SN/FH/EB)</td>
<td>5:30/6:30 PM Open Parish Potluck / Discussion (Fosters)</td>
<td>Knitting in the Spirit 2:00 PM (Claire Wilcox home)</td>
<td>1:00 PM (PHC)</td>
<td>Deadline for Weekly Rec Email is 10 AM on Friday</td>
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<td>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 3:15 PM Mennonites (SN/FH/EB)</td>
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<td>Spiritual Enrichment Evening at Rec 7:00 PM (FH)</td>
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<td>IFC Liaisons 5-8 PM (FH)</td>
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<td>12:15 Sanctuary Church Presentation with Rev. Julie Peeples (FH)</td>
<td>Session 6:00 PM (FH)</td>
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<td>Deadline for Weekly Rec Email is 10 AM on Friday</td>
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**NOTE:** The deadline for getting articles in to the church office for the October *Reconciler* will be Friday, September 15th. Calendar dates are needed by that time too! You may leave a message, email or fax at your convenience!
SANCTUARY MATTERS: Testimony and Best Practice
Saturday, September 16, 9 am-12:30 pm  https://unitedchurch.org/sanctuary-matters/
United Church of Chapel Hill, 1321 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Chapel Hill
Cost: $10 * Scholarships are available, email jennie@ncchurches.org

In light of recent events involving the deportation and fears of our immigrant brothers and sisters throughout the state, the NC Council of Churches’ annual Faith & Immigration Summit will focus on the topic of sanctuary this year. Our families, friends, neighbors and co-workers are terrified about being detained and deported; profiled because of their religion, race or political beliefs; losing their health coverage; and facing hate and discrimination. Learn why congregations across the region and country are choosing to support and provide sanctuary, what it means in practice, and how to be successful at “Sanctuary Matters: Testimony and Best Practices.”

Saturday, September 16 from 9 am-12:30 pm the United Church of Chapel will host an in-person, half-day training for congregations and clergy leaders interested in providing support and sanctuary for vulnerable individuals in North Carolina. We will discuss the many ways that your congregation can stand up against hate and dehumanization at this moment. Topics will include testimony from people who have been in sanctuary and congregations that have opened their doors as sanctuaries as well as training for congregations that are in the discernment process. The keynote speaker is Rev. Noel Andersen, Grassroots Organizer for Church World Service out of the Washington DC office. Other speakers include Rev. David Mateo of UCCH, Jessica Turner of the ACLU, Derek Jones of the Triangle Sanctuary Task Force, and Jennie Belle of the NC Council of Churches. Time will be provided for congregations to network by geographic or faith affinity and a Peruvian lunch will also be provided.

Church of Reconciliation
110 North Elliott Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 929-2127
Web Page: www.churchrec.org

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Sunday School at 9:45 AM  and  Worship at 11:00 AM
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E-mails: churchrec@churchrec.org; pastor@churchrec.org