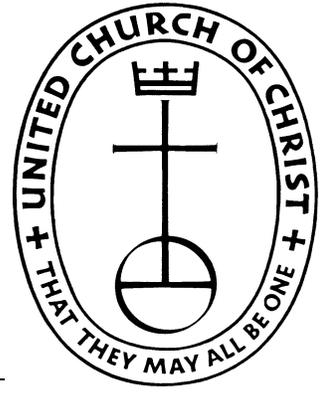


**First Christian
United Church of Christ
Newsletter
June - July 2018**



Notecard Sets
Includes:
7 notecards
and envelopes
\$10 per set

Order your notecards on Sunday... look for the clip board in the Sellars Parlor. Payment due at time of pick up.

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PASTOR'S COLUMN

I have a particular habit, perhaps all preachers do. Whenever I come across an interesting thought or idea or news article I clip it out, or make a note, and stuff it in a file for future reference. You never know when such material may come in handy! Of course, sometimes things get lost in a file and languish there for years on end. Such was the case with one clipping I recently unearthed. It was a column by Ellen Goodman on New Year's resolution of all things. Yet, as I reread it, her comments seemed very pertinent for the weeks of summer that lie ahead.

In her piece, Goodman reflected upon the life of a friend who yearly made a list of New Year's resolutions with the steely resolve of someone about to plunge into the waters off the coast of northern Maine on a cold winter's day! There were the same five pounds to lose. The promise to pay off her credit cards, to work harder, to finally learn Spanish. Then there was the resolve not to watch television, eat fat, not let the laundry, the bills, and the errands pile up. "*But where on this list is your **happy** New Year,*" Goodman asked? How come pleasure never makes it onto such a dutiful list of do's and don'ts? "*Doesn't joy also get soft and flabby if you neglect to exercise it?*"

"Nobody," Her friend replied, "*needs to resolve to eat chocolate!*"

Perhaps, but I'm reminded of the very first miracle that Jesus performed in the Gospel According to John. He didn't heal the sick. He didn't feed the hungry. He didn't move a mountain. The very first miracle that Jesus performed in John's Gospel took place at a wedding in Cana. The wine had run out, an inexcusable breach of hospitality. The party was ruined, the festivities ended. But Jesus changed water into wine that the celebration might continue. Sometimes we take ourselves and our tasks too seriously that the joy begins to seep from our lives like sand that slips through the fingers. There is no time for the frivolous. No time to devote ourselves to something as purposeless as joy! Yet, Jesus' very first miracle was done in the interest of just that.

Goodman continued:

What would happen if we write down our six, eight, or ten best moments over the past year? What if we ranked the hours that energized whole weeks; the exchanges that made us think or feel most deeply? A list of what made that year worth living. The non-aerobic highs.

Would there be any relationship between the list marked resolutions and the one marked pleasures? Between our stated goals and our remembered joys? Are we trying to get to where we really want to be? Or do we neglect the pursuit of happiness in our purposefulness? The pursuit of happiness that once carried the moral weight of an American revolution now seems frivolous and has to wait.

As the heat and humidity builds during these dog days of summer, perhaps it's worth reflecting upon New Year's resolutions long forgotten. What was included on our lists? What was neglected? Or, as a people of the Word, let us reflect again upon the miracle at Cana long ago. Perhaps that miracle was not intended exclusively for the enjoyment of those first century party goers. Perhaps it was intended for you and me as well!

Mark

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EVENTS

As July is a time when people are traveling and on vacation, our Sunday School program will take a vacation as well. Classes will resume the first Sunday in August on the 5th.

However, just because Sunday School is taking a break in July that doesn't mean the Board of Christian Education is. Far from it – July is the month for our annual Summer Symposium. As you'll recall, last summer Dr. L. D. Russell from the Religious Studies department at Elon University led a three-evening program on World Religions. This year the Board is planning another interesting program. Unfortunately, at this writing plans are still in the works. Watch Wednesday Musings and bulletins for final arrangements.

The Symposium will run from 6:30 – 7:30 pm July 16th – 18th in the Bray Fellowship Hall. For those who do not like to drive after dark, in July it's still light at 7:30 pm.

Finally, please note that because there will be no Sunday School in July, the Official Board meeting on the 8th will begin at 9am rather than 8:30 am.

PICTURE PROJECT TRANSITION IN JUNE

During the month of May, the Board of Deacons sponsored a special project. As May is the month of Mother's Day, the Board invited members to bring in a framed picture of a significant woman in their lives. The response produced a wonderful display in the church parlor. Many thanks to those who shared. As we move to June, the month of Father's Day, the display will change. Once more the Board invites members to bring in framed photos of men who have been significant in your lives. It has been a project that has helped us as a church remember and celebrate the saints in our lives. And it has been a lot of fun too!

SUPPER CLUB – MAY 1ST

The Supper Club gathering will be held on June 5th at Kimber's Restaurant in Gibsonville at 5:45 pm. This is a "pay your own way" event. Come, join in the fun and fellowship we always experience at these gatherings. Please call Eleanor Lovgren (336-226-2671) to make your reservation.

The Supper Club will not meet in July.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CIRCLES

The Margaret Lightbourne and Centennial Circles will not meet in June or July. The next meeting will be the Joint Women's Fellowship Meeting on Monday, August 6th.

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NEW DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE

We have updated and reformatted the last directory that we published and they are now available. They are printed on pink paper and you can find copies in the church office and beside the pulpit in the sanctuary. Take as many copies as you can use.

Responding to the comments we received, the layout of this directory is more user friendly and it is in a large print format as well.

Many thanks to Dotti Davis who re-typed the directory for us in this new format. And, as always, if you find any errors that we missed, please let us know.

CHURCH NOTECARDS AVAILABLE

For Mother's Day this year, all woman attending worship that day were given a three-pack of specially printed church notecards. The cards depict two scenes of the outside of our sanctuary, both day and night, as well as several shots of our stained-glass windows. In all, there are seven different cards. Many thanks to both Ken Little and Keith Miller for doing the photography.

If you didn't receive a packet of cards on Mother's Day or if you'd like more, they are available. They are being offered in a seven-card box set for \$10 a box. (Payment will be due at time of delivery.) Order forms are available in the church parlor along with a sheet depicting all the photos. Sign up for as many as you can use during the reception following worship or call the church office. When we have an idea of how many we need to produce, they will be printed and distributed

NEW ARTIST IN THE ART GALLERY

Many thanks to Iris Workman for her wonderful display in our Art Gallery in May. Iris is an enormously talented woman. The range of her artistic expressions are amazing. However, as we turn the calendar page to a new month we welcome a "new" artist.

Anyone who has visited Ann and Ross Strange's home is aware of the wonderful art that adorns their walls. Much of this art Ann collected from her father, Dr. Robert W. Brannock. This summer, Ann has graciously offered to share a portion of her collection for our enjoyment. Visit the walkway between the sanctuary and the Education Building and enjoy.

Before we began this project, that walkway was just a bland passage between buildings. Now, it overflow with life and color – all the result of the talented people associated with First Christian.

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A WORD OF THANKS

With the Spaghetti Supper behind us, a word of thanks must be said to all who worked so hard to make that event a success, especially Mike Smith who spearheaded the effort. This joint project of the Board of Deacons and Alamance Council for the Blind raised approximately \$1600 to be divided between the two.

And if you enjoyed the meal, it's not too late to enjoy it again. Quarts of the sauce are available for \$8 while supplies last. Look in the freezer in the church kitchen or speak with Phil Bray or Mike Smith.

... AND FROM CHURCH WORLD SERVICES ...

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your generous gift to the CWS Blankets program. As families and communities around the world recover from emergencies and struggle in the face of challenges you are standing with them. You provided relief and hope.

Your contribution provides hope to neighbors near and far, from migrant families facing cold and wet conditions to refugees who have just arrived in the United States to build a new future to supplies and support for those in need.

Because of you, Church World Service is able to respond when disaster occurs, and support is needed. We thank You!

May God bless you for your support,

Rev. John L. McCullough, President and CEO, Church World Service

(The Women's Fellowship contributed to this important ministry.)

BINGO NIGHT – JUNE 6TH

Once again, this year Phil Bray will be turning the ball and calling out the numbers. As in year's past, the prizes will be spectacular. Mary Newsome has adopted this as a special project and has been working on it for weeks. Many, many thanks Mary!

The Bray Fellowship Hall fills up quickly for this event so don't be late. Things will get started at 7:00 pm. And, as always, it will be fun for all!

PASTOR AWAY

This summer is the summer for weddings for Mark and Margot. They will be either presiding or attending the weddings of two young people they have known for years through another church. For the first wedding in north Georgia, Mark will be away June 1st – 8th. Later that month he will combine another wedding in Colorado with a visit to his grandkids. (and their family) June 20th – July 4th.

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SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

In addition to the events that have been mentioned in individual articles in this edition, there are several more on the horizon. Be sure to mark your calendars:

- June 5th – Supper Club at Kimber’s Restaurant in Gibsonville – 5:45 pm
- June 6th – Bingo Night – 7:00 pm
- June 10th – Senior Recognition Sunday
- June 15th – Deadline for contributions to the Mission Fund for Matt Rice and Dotti Davis
- June 15th – Deadline for appreciation for the Carrie McLean Taylor Scholarship Fund. See the church’s web site at firstchristianucc.org for details and guidelines.
- June 17th – Father’s Day
- June 21st – 23rd – Southern Conference Annual Meeting in Greensboro. The Fonville’s will be attending on behalf of the church.
- June 24th – last day of Sunday School

- July 8th – Official Board meets at 9:00 am rather than 8:30 am

- July – 16th – 18th – Summer Symposium

- August 5th – Sunday School re-starts
- August 9th – Ice Cream Social 7:00 pm

ISAAC ANING RECOGNIZED

At a recent service of worship, Isaac Aning’s father, Oti, spoke of Isaac’s graduation from Wingate University on May 12th at which he received a special award, the A.F. Hendricks Award. The president of the university said that he had received this award 20 years ago and wanted Isaac to return in 20 years to head the university. The university’s web site had this piece:

“Isaac Yeboah Aning, originally from Ghana but now living in Graham, N.C., won the A.F. Hendricks Award, given to the graduating man who represents the ideals of scholarship, leadership and service. A biology major with a chemistry minor, Aning was Wingate’s 2017 Homecoming King. Described as an “enthusiastic, passionate learner” whose motto at Wingate was simply “love everyone,” Aning has been accepted into an accelerated BSN program at Western Carolina University and plans to become an obstetric midwife”.

As Peggy Johnson put it “we can all be proud of the part we played in encouraging Isaac and being supportive of this child of the church”

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FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Year to Date through 04-30-18

	Actual	Budget
Income:	\$73,958.17	\$67,474.36
<u>Expense</u>	<u>\$64,999.25</u>	<u>\$67,327.96</u>
Net Balance:	\$8,958.92	\$ 146.40
Balance in Checking 04-30-18		\$12,231.93

As you can see, everyone's continued support is still greatly needed to carry on the ministry of the church. Please send in your giving today.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ken Little and Connie Collins
Treasurer and Accounting Manager