

"We are the United Church of Christ, called to love neighbor and build a just world for all."

Southern Conference United Church of Christ e - Newsletter / September 21, 2017



**Without a vision, the people perish...
Can UCC unite around
children, neighbor and creation?**

SOC Board of Directors met in Burlington on September 16.

David Adams (Suffolk, VA) is presiding.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" -- Proverbs 29:18 [KJV]

Photo by C. L. Stumb



SOC Board members face reality check amidst responsibility accepted

by Rev. C. L. "Curly" Stumb

BURLINGTON - A one day meeting of the Southern Conference Board of Directors saturated members with policies, procedures, history, finances and fiduciary responsibilities. Prompted by the Conference Minister's report, conversation ensued around core values, mission and vision. Rev. Davis (D.Min.) highlighted three initiatives outlined by Rev. John Dorhauer in his

General Synod speech, (recently elected President and General Minister of the UCC). They included: 1) love of children / 2) love of neighbor / 3) love of creation. Board members were encouraged to reference these talking points as they speak of the United Church of Christ, Southern Conference, and reasons for being part of a visionary and vibrant denomination.

Dorhauer [at the Baltimore General Synod meeting] shared a preview of the missional endeavor..., as he neared the end of his report. He called them "Three Great Loves," and aimed the initiative at building a more just world centered on:

- the love of children,
- the love of neighbor
- and the love of creation.

Speaking about the love of children, he recalled how Marian Wright Edelman, a keynote speaker at General Synod 2007 in Hartford and founder of the Children's Defense Fund, built her life's work by asking, "How are children doing?" For the love of neighbor, he pointed to the example of The Good Samaritan, and how he cared for the alien and stranger. As for the love of creation, Dorhauer said it was critical that the planet be preserved for future generations.

"What does a denomination committed to love, welcome, and justice look like? You are going to help us answer that question," Dohauer concluded. "Let us continue to practice this life-changing, Christ-centered love. And let the world steady herself for the transformation we continue in the practice of such love. We are the United Church of Christ; called to love neighbor and build a just world for all."

Read report: ["Dorhauer outlines new framework for pursuing love and justice as a unified church"](#)





Shaken North Carolina Church officially accepts pastor's resignation

September 15, 2017

News Release from WNCA office

CONTACT: The Rev. Jerry Rhyne, Minister for Conference Affairs

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WINSTON-SALEM - The leaders of historic, rural Bethany United Church of Christ said they were stunned to receive the emailed resignation of their pastor, Robert W. Lee IV, a few days after he denounced white supremacy at the Aug. 27 MTV Video Music Awards. On Sunday, September 10, the congregation voted to accept Lee's unexpected resignation.

With no members of the governing council tuned into the VMAs, the leaders of Bethany only became aware of any conflict when Pastor Lee emailed his resignation to governing council chair Jerry Clodfelter a few days after the program aired.

"I was headed out of town when I received Pastor Lee's email," said Clodfelter, "so I respectfully declined his resignation and asked him if we could discuss his desire to resign when I returned. No one at Bethany was aware any problem existed, and we were unprepared for the media attention. To the knowledge of the governing council, no one at Bethany had an issue with Pastor Lee's statements on television."

Founded in 1789 as one of the earliest Reformed congregations in North Carolina, Bethany's ministry focuses on Sunday worship. The church supports the social justice advocacy for which the United Church of Christ is known in the region and beyond.

"Bethany was so pleased to have found Pastor Lee," said The Rev. Jerry Rhyne, Minister for Conference Affairs in the Western NC Association of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. "Small churches like Bethany - churches that want to grow into a fresh future - can offer young ministers a wonderful opportunity to explore their vocation and spread their wings. We remain hopeful that Bethany will find the right woman or man to continue their legacy."

Lee, 24, a recent graduate of Duke Divinity School and descendant of the

Confederate General, had been invited by MTV to introduce the mother of Heather Heyer, the woman who died on August 12 from injuries sustained while counter-protesting the white nationalist Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA. Since accepting in May the part-time call to lead this small congregation, Lee's leadership and preaching had been well-received by the congregation. Lee was working on becoming credentialed in the progressive United Church of Christ, with his congregation's full spiritual and financial support.

[About the United Church of Christ - The Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ is one of the most diverse in the mainline Protestant denomination, which comprises nearly 900,000 members and 5,000 congregations nationwide. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, the UCC is a church of many firsts, including the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly-gay man and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.]



Ashley Lecture Series features Rev. Matthew Wright

HENDERSONVILLE - The tenth year of the annual Walter E. Ashley Memorial Lecture Series hosted by First Congregational United Church of Christ continues October 20-22 with the Rev. Matthew Wright, M. Div., an Episcopal priest, writer, and retreat leader focusing on "Reclaiming Wisdom: How Christianity Is Evolving in the Third Millennium."

A native of Murphy, NC and a UNC-Chapel Hill graduate, Matthew is now a student of Cynthia Bourgeault and a teacher for Northeast Wisdom. As priest-in-charge at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in Woodstock, NY he's described as a gifted speaker and writer, expressing himself in both penetrating poetic language and extremely clear rational thought. His youth (31) adds a freshness of perspective; he is inspirational and dynamic. "I want to reclaim Christianity as a path of transformation and awakening," says Wright. "So often it's about believing - but at its heart,

Christianity is a path." He has explored a number of paths, beginning with his Pentecostal roots, then from Zen to Sufism, bringing a range of insights to his approach to inter-spiritual practice.

The weekend's path begins on Friday, October 20, at 7:00 pm with "How We Lost Our Wisdom: Recovering the Christian Contemplative Path and Reclaiming Jesus as Wisdom Teacher." On Saturday, October 21, 10:00 am the topic is "The Gospels of Thomas and Mary: Restoring Wisdom Texts and Teaching." At 1:00 pm is "Christianity in a Second Axial Age: Teilhard de Chardin and Raimon Panikkar as Prophets of an Evolving Path. "A noon lunch is available. Prices are \$25 for each lecture and/or \$75 for all three lectures plus Saturday lunch.

On Sunday, October 22 Rev. Wright will speak at the 9:00 am Adult Forum and 10:30 am Worship Service, both in the Sanctuary. There is no charge for the Sunday events. Scholarship assistance is available. Tickets are available online at www.fcchendersonville.org, or may be purchased in person at the First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1735 Fifth Ave.W, Hendersonville, NC.

[Download flyer](#)



World Communion Sunday - October 1

World Communion Sunday offers congregations a distinctive opportunity to experience Holy Communion in the context of the global community of faith. The first Sunday of October has become a time when Christians in every culture break bread and pour the cup to remember and affirm Christ as the Head of the Church. On that day, they

remember that they are part of the whole body of believers...[Keep Reading](#)



Seventh Annual Retired UCC Servants Retreat

*Theme: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS
Practicing our Faith in the Public Square*

*Monday - Wednesday, October 2-4, 2017
Blowing Rock Conference Center, Blowing Rock, North Carolina*

An Event for intellectual stimulation; spiritual enlightenment and reflection; and renewing friendships and/or making new friends for Retired UCC Clergy, Missionaries, Volunteer Ministry Workers and Spouses of the Southeast and Southern Conferences of the United Church of Christ.

Say planners, "Be sure to get more people to sign up for the retreat! Just call Amy Stamey at Blowing Rock 828-295-7813 to reserve a room...payment is due upon arrival. We are looking to have our usual number of about 50 people there!"

[Download registration information and schedule](#)

Prayers of the Conference



... for Bonnie Dinges

who, along with husband/caregiver Dick, are faced with decisions regarding facility, services and future care.

Keep them in your your prayers.



Women's Voices



News... Women of Southern Conference

Betty Griffin highlights forthcoming Church Women Enrichment and District meetings

October 2017 (see below)

Southern Region Women's Retreat: October 20-22, 2017

At Mo Ranch in Hunt, Texas

Online registration is open.

March / April 2018

ENCA-CW Spring Gathering: March 24, 2018

Elon Community Church UCC, 271 N. Williamson Ave, Elon, NC 27244

EVA-CW Spring Rally: April 7, 2018

Providence UCC, 2200 Vicker Ave., Chesapeake, VA 23324



2017 UCC Southern Region Women's Conference/Retreat

Theme: Joyful Expectation, Peaceful Inspiration

October 20-22, 2017

Mo Ranch, Hunt, Texas

Update: *Hurricane Harvey moved the Registration deadline.*

UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat is extending registration until September 19th,

2017.

No late registration fees apply!

Come and get refreshed and renewed.

The UCC Southern Region Women's Retreat Oct 20-22, 2017, at Mo Ranch in Hunt TX and themed "Joyful Expectation, Peaceful Inspiration", has registrants coming from 4 UCC Conferences: Florida, Southern, Southeast and South Central. Women needing transportation to and from Mo Ranch from the San Antonio airport should contact quinerly@sbcglobal.com very soon. A van can be available for 6 to 8 people; reservations are needed.

For SOC retreat and transportation questions, contact Betty Griffin at bbg9@bellsouth.net. Betty serves on the planning team and has registered for the event.

[Register today! **](#)**

Download materials:

- [Retreat highlights](#)
- [Brochure](#)



Southern Conference Calendar



September 23

A celebration is planned at Johns River Valley Camp **to honor the Rev. C. L. "Curly" Stumb**, to recognize the impact of his ministry by the waters of the Johns River, and affirm his walk amidst the people of Southern Conference.

September 24, 1:00 pm

Installation service of Meghan Davis Young at Congregational UCC, 210 Melrose Ave., **Tryon, NC** 28782. Clergy are invited to wear stoles; spouses invited to sit with clergy.

September 24:

Providence United Church Men's Day (Chesapeake, VA) and a Pre-Men's Day Breakfast on September 23. All EVA pastors and church members are invited. [For further information, see brochure](#)

September 24, 11:00 am

Mount Calvary UCC (Durham) First Aide, Lilies of the Valley and Ushers' Anniversaries

September 26, 1:00 pm

Clergy and lay members of the Western North Carolina Association are invited to attend and participate in an **Ecclesiastical Council** to be held at First Congregational UCC Church, 400 West Radiance Dr., Greensboro, NC 27401. The purpose of this Ecclesiastical Council is **the examination and approval of Patricia Boswell for Ordination** in the United Church of Christ.

October 1

World Communion Sunday / [read more](#)

October 2-4

Retired Servants' Retreat, Blowing Rock Conference Center

Event chair: [George Bennett](#) of Southeast Conference

Southern Conference contact: [Larry Bolick](#)

[Read more](#)

October 4-6

Victory Christian UCC (Petersburg, VA) Fall Revival. [Please see attached flyer](#) with complete information about guest speakers and times.

October 7

Western NC Association Annual Meeting

Abernethy Laurel's, 102 Leonard Avenue, Newton, NC

[Download call letter](#)

[Download mail-in registration form](#)

October 8, 4:00 pm

Mount Calvary UCC (Durham) Echoes 67th Choir Anniversary

October 14

Eastern NC Association Annual Meeting

Burchette's Chapel UCC, Manson, NC

[Download updated agenda, call letter & registration form](#)

October 20-22

2017 UCC Southern Region Women's Conference/Retreat;

Mo Ranch, Hunt, Texas / [download brochure](#)

October 20-22

Annual **Walter E. Ashley Memorial Lecture Series** hosted by **First Congregational UCC, Hendersonville, NC**, continues with the Rev. Matthew Wright, M. Div., an Episcopal priest, writer, and retreat leader focusing on "Reclaiming Wisdom: How Christianity Is Evolving in the Third Millennium." [download flyer](#)

October 22-27

The **2017 LINC Ministry Mission Trip** is now scheduled for Oct. 22-27 to Lumberton, NC with Rev. Larry Bolick as the leader. Find attached the necessary information and an application. There will be an information and planning meeting at Grace Reformed UCC on Sunday, Sept. 17th at 5:00 pm. There is great need in the Lumberton area for help after the flood waters of last year's Hurricane Matthew. [Download information sheet and registration form.](#)

October 22, 11:00 am

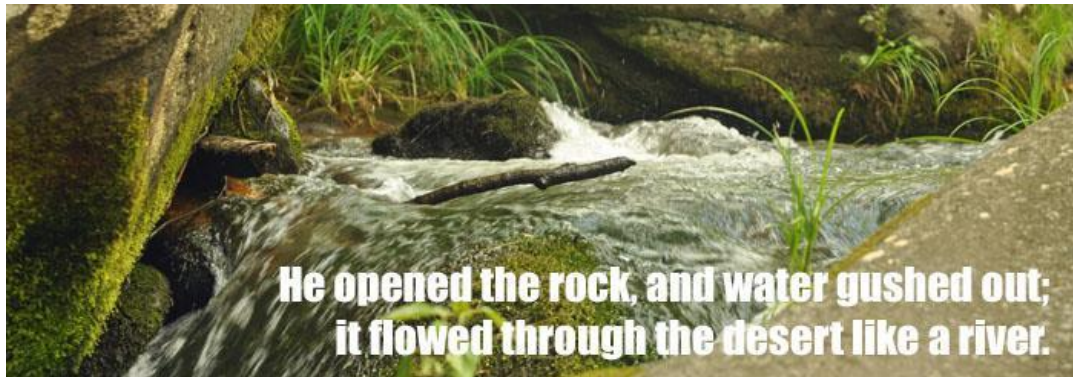
"Mighty Men" of Mount Calvary UCC, 1715 Athens Avenue in Durham celebrate Men's Day

November 3-4

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center will be offering **Healthy Congregations workshop** in Irmo, SC (near Columbia)/ [download brochure](#) / read more about about mission and resources for church leaders on [LMPC's website](#).

November 5

Mount Calvary UCC (Durham) 124th Church Anniversary



**He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.**

Lectionary reading - September 24, 2017 / Psalm 105:41

Photo by C. L. Stumb

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