

Communigram

Community United Church of Christ

A Just Peace, Progressive, Open and Affirming Congregation

From the Desk of Rev. Michael Mulberry...

As a history major, I studied primary or original sources, developed an appreciation for mythology, and learned how to critically evaluate texts. Supposedly, that B.A. in history represents that I did all these things. I think part of being a history major was also developing a critical awareness of how much history is reflected in our present context—how much is history repeating itself in current events.

For me, such study is not unlike Scriptural study. Time and again Scriptural scholars are deciding what biblical stories are appropriate for a given time. Perhaps one of the reasons many biblical stories were finally written down was because, as people made meaning, they saw the story happening again in their own time.

As Talha Al-Fayadh made the point in the AWARE event, "Stories from Iraq", hosted by

our church last week, all sacred scriptures have stories that repeat over and over again. As Qoholeth, the writer from Ecclesiastes, wrote, "There is nothing new under the sun."

As the other speakers presented at the AWARE event last week, I began thinking of the Babylonian occupation of Israel (our Hebrew Scripture through Advent), the Roman occupation of Galilee (our Gospel Scripture through Advent and Christmas), and our present occupation of Iraq. We are desperately trying to portray our occupation of Iraq as "friendly", but I wonder if there ever is a "friendly" occupation. Occupation is occupation is occupation.

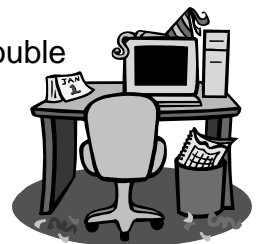
The occupation stories we hear are not uncommon. United States' military personnel driving super slow and stopping to drink a soft drink while Iraqi civilians wait in their cars, afraid

to pass and be shot as insurgents. The torture and abuse done to Iraqis in the Abu-Ghraib prison. Now hearing that we used white phosphorous on the people of Fallujah (against the Chemical Weapons Convention whether combatants or civilians). These stories relate that the words "friendly" and "occupation" do not go together.

So I invite you to listen for the Iraqi people as they speak their hopes and dreams through our Scripture passages this Advent and Christmas. "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Fallujah, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Ruler's hand double for all her sins."

Shalom,

Mike



**Illinois Conference,
All-Conference
Meeting**

February 11, 2006
Jennifer's Garden, Morris, IL
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Packet will be available
from the office the third week of December.

Sarah Bloesch Traveling to Ghana

Sarah Bloesch was only a member of our church for a short time, but during her stay here as a graduate chemistry student and worker at Cunningham Children's Home, she attended almost every event and every activity in the church. When Sarah told me of her plans to go to seminary, I also learned that both her parents are UCC pastors and that she has hopes of serving as a UCC missionary in Africa. Sarah is following through on that com-

mitment by working with African refugees as part of her field education at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. She has also signed up for a continuing education experience at Eden which travels to Ghana in January.

The cost of her experience is \$1700 plus incidentals (such as inoculations). The Eastern Association has already agreed to pay \$200 toward her experi-

ence. If individual members are interested in helping to meet the rest of Sarah's experience, please write out a check to Community UCC with "Sarah Bloesch to Ghana" on the memo line. I look forward to the time when Sarah returns to Community UCC to share her experience with us. She is one in a long line of students and seminarians that this congregation has supported and embraced.

Thank You

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for all the acts of kindness shown to my mother, Muriel Riggs, and me during her earthly life, and also now that she is with us only in spirit. Your kind words and personal notes, phone calls, cards, visits, flowers, memorials, and special music helped (are ARE helping) our family so much. The comfort and support you've shown us will always be gratefully remembered.

Sincerely, Linda Morgan



Sympathy

Word has been received of the death of Blanchard Sprunger, former member of Community United Church of Christ. He passed away November 29th in Millington, Tennessee. Funeral services were held in Mulberry, Indiana on December 3rd.

Will You Attend New Member Orientation on January 14?

Because child care and lunch will be provided at the New Member Orientation on Saturday, January 14, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., we need to know if you will be attending so that we have the requisite number of child care providers and food available. Please contact the church office (344-5091) if you are interested.

Community UCC always needs the many gifts of an ever-widening circle and extends that welcome for you to join that circle. We will introduce for understanding, participation, and discussion, some history of the United Church of Christ, the Illinois Conference, and Community United Church of Christ. See the most recent identity material to come from our de-

nomination. Learn the various opportunities for ministry throughout our denomination, conference, and local church. No matter who you are or where you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here.

Saturday, January 14, from 8:30 to 12:00 p.m.

WORSHIP DATES

Two Christmas Eve Services This Year:

5:30 – 6:15 P.M. Informal Family Oriented Service
 6:15 – 7:15 P.M. Wassail, Punch and Cookies in the Parlor
 7:30 P.M. Traditional Candlelight Service, with the choir



Christmas Day Service: We will have our regular Sunday morning service at our church, beginning at 10:15 A.M.

New Year's Day Service: We will have a joint service with McKinley Presbyterian Church and St. Andrew's Lutheran Campus Center. It will be at **10:00 am** at St. Andrew's, 909 S. Wright, Champaign.

Early Christmas Eve Service

"The Gifts of Christmas"

At the early Christmas Eve service we will be enjoying a service geared more to young families and the energy young families bring to our congregation. The service will also celebrate "The Gifts of Christmas." Our children are barraged with the message that Christmas is about getting and then getting some more. We hope this service will offer different values.

White Gifts: One of the ways we will celebrate the gifts of Christmas is through white gifts each person brings to the manger to help support the TIMES Center, a homeless and transitional shelter for men and a soup kitchen for the community. Here are the needs the TIMES Center has at this time: dry milk, spices, sugar (not flour or corn meal), dish soap, scrubbing utensils for dishes, napkins, canned soups, canned vegetables, and canned fruits. Please wrap each of your gifts in white tissue paper to present to the manger to be brought forward at the appropriate time during Christmas Eve worship. We will take over the White Gifts to the TIMES Center on Christmas Day.

The Gift of Room, The Gift of Bread, The Gift of Sight, The Gift of Light: We will also celebrate the gifts of Christmas through different values we bring to the manger: hospitality, food, countercultural vision, and true light. To symbolize those gifts, we need different people who will make or bring items to place in the manger. One person or family will make large keys. One person or family will make bread. One family will bring a globe. If you are interested in making the keys or bread or bringing a globe that you or your family can bring forward during the early Christmas Eve service, please call the church office (344-5091).

We hope this service will add to the great traditions we already have on Christmas Eve. Come to the early Christmas Eve service with your White Gifts and all the gifts God has given us to share during this special time.



Calendar

12/08, Thursday

9:00 am Bulletin Deadline

1:00 pm Women's Fellowship @ Karen

Bush's home

8:00 pm AA (P)

12/10, Saturday

9:00 am Women's Book Club at *Espresso Royale*

5:30 pm Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal (S)

6:30 pm Christmas Pageant (S)

12/11, Sunday ~ Third Sunday in Advent

9:00 am Sunday School for all ages
(FH, R 1-5, CR)

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal (S)

10:15 am Worship with "Christmas Past & Present" Music Presentation (S)

11:30 am Coffee Fellowship (P)

6:00 pm Jr. & Sr. High Youth (TR)

12/12, Monday

10:00 am Staff Meeting (L)

6:30 pm CODAC: Just Eating (CR)

12/14, Wednesday

Noon Prayer Protest

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (P)

12/15, Thursday

9:00 am Bulletin Deadline

9:30 am Preschool Play Group

8:00 pm AA (P)

12/17, Saturday

9:00 am Women's Book Club at *Espresso Royale*

12/18, Sunday ~ Fourth Sunday in Advent

9:00 am Sunday School for all ages
(FH, R 1-5)

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal (S)

10:15 am Worship (S)

11:30 am Coffee Fellowship (P)

6:00 pm Jr. & Sr. High Youth (TR)

7:00 pm Administrative Committee

12/19, Monday

10:00 am Staff Meeting (L)

10:00 am Communigram Deadline

12/21, Wednesday

Noon Prayer Protest

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (P)

Key: FH=Fellowship Hall, CR=Conference Room, S=Sanctuary, P=Parlor, L=Library, TR=Tower Room, R1...5=Lower Level Classrooms

TIMES Center Soup

CUCC will be making soup for the TIMES Center Dec. 12-20, basically any time now. Buckets will be available in the parlor the next few Sundays if you need them. Any kind of vegetable/meat/pasta soup is fine. Cream soups do not freeze well. You may bring soup to the church if you wish, and I will take it to the TIMES Center. The TIMES Center can also use motel soaps, shampoo, new men's socks, as well as volunteers to talk with residents and do other jobs as you wish. Questions?? Call Jan Wilson (367 5783).



PEACE

6th-12th Grade Illinois Conference Youth

A Mid Winter Retreat

January 20-22, 2006 ~ 7 pm Friday - 11 am Sunday
Pilgrim Park, Princeton, Illinois

A Weekend About:

- ☺ Being a Just Peace Church
- ☺ How to Practice Peace
- ☺ Peace as a Foundation for our Faith
- ☺ Games, Food and Fun

Registration Deadline is January 6th. Cost is \$110.
Youth pay \$50 and CUCC Youth Group will pay \$60.

For more information contact Rev. Tracy Heilman (344-5091) or tracy@community-ucc.org



Sunday School



2005 has been a busy year in the Sunday School! We

have three very active classes for the children.

Our three and four year olds make up the Preschool Class. Jessica Bush, Emily Ward and Susan Requa are the teachers. Sometimes they have only one student, other times they have six little ones. Either way, they are introducing our

little ones to the stories of our faith using the Whole People of God lessons.

Our kindergarten through 2nd grade students make up our Level 1 class. Michael Trout and Jim Carnahan are the Shepherds for this class. We have thirteen students in this class!

Our level 2 students are those in 3rd through 8th grade. Sandy Melvin and Rebecca Eubig are

the Shepherds. Twelve students make up this class.

In addition to these Teachers and Shepherds, we have adults and youth who lead music and workshops. In our Fall/Winter semester, 20 different adults and youth have been a part.

Come join the circle of learning that takes place each Sunday morning from 9:00 am until 10:00 am!

Adults Needed

In January, we will be looking for Workshop Leaders as we begin a new Rotation in the Sunday School. Our lessons will focus on the story of Jesus calling the Disciples. The story will be heard, experienced and lived through Service Projects, Creative Arts, Cooking, Games, and Puzzles. The lessons provide the teachers with the background information needed to share the story and the activities with the children. The Religious Education Committee can assist in preparation. Workshop Leaders commit to presenting the lesson for 2 weeks (once to the Kindergarten-2nd graders, once to the 3rd – 8th graders).

We are looking for Workshop Leaders for the following weeks and lessons. Please contact Tracy if you are interested, or would like to learn more.

	<u>Level One Class</u>	<u>Level Two Class</u>
January 8	Fun & Games	Show & Tell
January 15	Show & Tell	Fun & Games
January 22	Community Life	Brain Teasers
January 29	Brain Teasers	Community Life
February 5	Hands On	Time Out
February 12	Time Out	Hands On
February 19	Food & People	Food & People
February 26	**Intergenerational Discipleship Event**	

Youth Group

We are focused on the 12th Night Feast! We will continue to practice for the event on the 11th and 18th. No Youth Group on the 25th or the 1st. We will be scheduling additional practices between the 25th and the 8th. And please reserve the afternoon of the 8th; we'll need to decorate, get food ready and do a final dress rehearsal!





The Ladies of the Manor

Invite You To

The Twelfth Night Feast

Sunday, January 8 at 5:00 pm

In the Fellowship Hall

Tickets are \$20/Person

Contact Rev. Tracy Heilman (344-5091) or tracy@community-ucc.org

to reserve your tickets today!

Community United Church of Christ



805 South Sixth, Champaign, IL 61820

Ph: (217) 344-5091 FAX: (217) 344-5008

Website: www.community-ucc.org Email: info@community-ucc.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thu 9 am-3 pm



CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Michael Mulberry.....mike@community-ucc.org

Religious Education Director: Rev. Tracy Heilman.....tracy@community-ucc.org

Choir Director: Robert Smith.....bobsmith@community-ucc.org

Organist: Linda Vaughn.....lindavaughn@community-ucc.org

Facilities Manager: Robert Scaggs.....bobscaggs@community-ucc.org

Office Manager: Cindy Dodd.....info@community-ucc.org

Parish Nurse: Linda Morgan

Community Life Calendar Keeper: Vicky Robertson.....victoriarobertson@insightbb.com

Ombuds Person: Deborah Townsend.....dtown34@sbcglobal.net

Nursery Care Providers: Laurie Lyter

UCC CAMPUS MINISTRY STAFF

Campus Minister: Rev. Karen Bush.....Karen@community-ucc.org

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of Christ
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805 S. Sixth St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Weekly Office Hours

Mon.-Thu. ~ 9 am-3 pm

Sunday Schedule

Sunday School ~ 9:00 am

Choir Rehearsal ~ 9:30 am

Worship ~ 10:15 am

Coffee Fellowship ~ 11:30 am

Jr & Sr High Youth Group ~ 6:00 pm

Next Communion
will be mailed out
on December 21.

We're on the Web!
www.community-ucc.org

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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Address Service Requested

DON'T MISS THE...

"STAR CHILD"

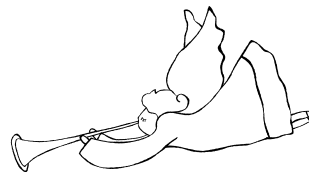
THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



ON SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 10
6:30 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

The CUCC Chancel Choir
Presents...

"Christmas Past and Present"



During the Sunday,
December 11th 10:15 am Service

Robert L. Smith, Director
Linda Vaughn, Organist/Accompanist
Choir, Soloists and Brass Choir

Please bring friends to hear this wonderful
Christmas music.