



NEW COVENANT COMMUNITY

Progressive | Spiritual | Inclusive

SEPTEMBER 2012 NEWSLETTER

NCC COMMUNITY MEETING AFTER WORSHIP SEPT. 9

Please plan to attend our Fall Community Meeting after the worship service on Sunday, Sept. 9. The purpose of this meeting is to **elect members to serve on the Nominating Committee**, who will present the slate of Steering Committee and officer nominees to the Community in December. Please consider whether or not you might like to be nominated to serve.

**Sunday Service
returns to 10:30am
on Sunday, Sept. 9.**



NCC CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PROGRESSIVE MINISTRY

Sunday, September 23

10:30am Service followed by luncheon/program

Join us as we celebrate New Covenant Community's 20th Anniversary!

We will commemorate 20 years of progressive ministry in Bloomington/Normal during our 10:30am service, followed by a luncheon and program—all in the CRC Chapel.

Please sign-up between now and Sunday, Sept. 16 for the luncheon.

We will serve the main dish (broasted chicken) and ask you to bring sides.

We will ask for a \$5 donation at the luncheon to help cover costs.

We need some help as we prepare for the special day — photos and/or written memories we can share as part of the celebration. What are some of your NCC memories from the last 20 years? Do you have any pictures of NCC parishioners or activities from the last

New Covenant Community
210 W. Mulberry St.
Normal, IL 61761
309.454.7362

decade, especially its earlier parts? If so please give or email them to Susan Ryder or Joe Boudreaux. (normalsue@aol.com)

**Have you seen our web site redesign yet?
Go to www.nccnormal.org to check it out!**



NCC ADULT EDUCATION ACADEMY

The fall 2012 Adult Education Program is gearing up to begin in October.

Sunday Mornings beginning October 7 ~

“Living the Questions” DVD – Part 3: This is the third of a three-part series, and you have not seen these sections before. You may take this class even if you missed parts 1 and 2.



“The Church is All of Us: How Is Our Story Evolving?”

“The church is all of us,” Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, reminded listeners before his untimely assassination. Protestants since Martin Luther’s era have embraced the concept of the “Priesthood of All Believers”, i.e., every person responsible for following Jesus in ministry. With these important prompts in mind, what then is the “story” of NCC that describes us with a uniquely shared ministry as we grow into our future? To explore potential answers for this and other questions, we are offering a class, led by Donella Hess Grabill and Charline Watts, to consider opportunities for us all in the practice of NCC’s mission.

The class will meet **for six sequential Sundays, October 7 – November 11**. At the close of the class, a written summary report of class members’ perspectives will be prepared for the Steering Committee and our work shared in an appropriate form to NCC members. All are invited to attend. However, since it may be offered in the Spring term also, please *sign-up only if you can attend all sessions*. Maximum 20 participants.

Session titles are suggested below, although the subject specifics will be adapted as the class unfolds. The materials used in the class are taken from resources available at Alban Institute, a Progressive Christianity Center for resources and training.

Session I: Practicing Our NCC Story

Session II: Practicing the Art of Being & Becoming vs. Having & Maintaining.

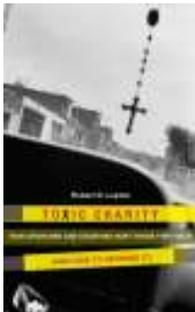
Session III: Practicing Community

Session IV: Sunday Gathering Practices

Session V: Practicing a Presence in the World

Session VI: Practicing our Reframing Story

Wednesday evenings at 7pm beginning on October 4



Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (And How to Reverse It)

Public service is a way of life for Americans; giving is a part of our national character. But compassionate instincts and generous spirits aren’t enough, says veteran urban activist Robert D. Lupton. In this groundbreaking guide, he reveals the disturbing truth about charity: all too much of it has become toxic, devastating to the very people it’s meant to help. This discussion group will last for four weeks, and will meet at the Campus Religious Center, led by members of the Social Justice Group.

As we begin our 2012–2013 program, we encourage you to participate. Groups are being offered at different times for your convenience throughout the coming months. You can sign up on the back table of the Chapel for one of our Fall 2012 Groups beginning the first Sunday in September.

PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

By Gwen Pruyne

Have you ever made a sweeping generalization and have it challenged by someone who says, “Prove it”? That is what happened to Hal Taussig. He said there were a thousand progressive churches in the U.S. “Prove it,” said a doubter. So, he did and found more than a thousand more-or-less progressive groups. In the Appendix of his book, *A New Spiritual Home: Progressive Christianity at the Grass Roots*, NCC is listed on page 184. (Published in 2006)

The blurb describing the book also summarizes the progressive movement: “A new kind of Christianity is emerging at the grass roots. Full of heart-felt expression, artistic creativity and liberal social values.....Taussig describes five characteristics of this new movement.” Taussig’s five characteristics include Spiritual Vitality, Intellectual Integrity, Transgressing Gender Boundaries, Vitality without Superiority, Justice and Ecology.

The Center for Progressive Christianity states: By calling ourselves progressive, we mean that we are Christians who:

1. Have found an approach to God through the life and teachings of Jesus;
2. Recognize the faithfulness of other people who have other names for the way to God’s realm and acknowledge that their ways are true for them, as our ways are true for us;
3. Understand the sharing of bread and wine in Jesus’ name to be a representation of an ancient vision of God’s feast for all peoples;
4. Invite all people to participate in our community and worship life without insisting that they become like us in order to be acceptable;
5. Know that the way we behave toward one another and toward other people is the fullest expression of what we believe;
6. Find more grace in the search for understanding than we do in dogmatic certainty—more value in questioning than in absolutes;
7. Form ourselves into communities dedicated to equipping one another for the work we feel called to do; striving for peace and justice among all people, protecting and restoring the integrity of all God’s creation, and bringing hope to those Jesus called the least of his sisters and brothers;
8. Recognize that being followers of Jesus is costly and entails selfless love, conscientious resistance to evil, and renunciation of privilege.

Taussig is a professor of New Testament and member of the Jesus Seminar

PARTNERS IN HEALING

NCC is a delegate congregation to the Advocate BroMenn Medical Center. As part of that delegation, we participate in a project of intentional prayer for specific medical units associated with the Medical Center on a rotating basis with other local congregations.



Each congregation is asked to pray for patients receiving medical care in a specific unit, as well as for the staff who are treating them and/or for their families for a month. During September, NCC will be praying for the patients, families, and staff of the Inpatient Unit (IU) at Advocate Eureka Hospital. The 25-bed inpatient unit at ECH carries an average census of 10 patients. The unit serves all kinds of patients, including surgical, cardiac and general medical patients.

A big, big THANK YOU to all of volunteers that helped out during the August 19 garden work session. The outside gardens now look terrific and renovation of the courtyard is well under way.

Thanks too to all of you who donated garden items and plants or gave us monetary help this year. These donations are a big help in keeping our expenses down while we maintain attractive grounds and plantings. (We can still use perennials, shrubs, groundcover stones and paving materials.)

~Joe Boudreaux (827-0797)





September Birthdays

- 1 Judy Boudreaux
- 3 Gabe Maurer / Sue O'Neal
- 8 Mark Wyman / Sally Turner
- 11 Art White
- 18 Scott Bolbock
- 20 Chris Kaufman
- 23 Tom Nylund
- 26 Michelle Wait

If we don't have your birthday, please let Susan Ryder know so that we can include you next year!



IT TAKES ALL KINDS!

Since there isn't room in our weekly bulletins to include the names of all the NCC'ers who serve us on a variety of committees and work groups, we will list their names in the newsletter on a periodic basis so that you can see and appreciate all of the folks who are serving New Covenant Community on a variety of levels.

Piano Players: Russ Rutter has been our regular piano player since 2000, and played to fill in for Lloyd upon request before that. Also sitting in occasionally for Russ are Joe Grabill, David Hirst, Suzie Hutton, Chris Kaufman, and Lena Yurs.

Steering Committee: Nikki Brauer, Chair; Dave Hirst, Vice-Chair; Kim Tingley, Treasurer; Marie Genrich, Secretary; At-large members: Joe Boudreaux, David Hirst, Garrett Scott, Pam Unkrich; Pastors: Bob and Susan Ryder.

Campus Religious Center Board Reps: Matthew Dahmm, Brian Finch, Mark Genrich, Bob Ryder, Pam Unkrich.

Pastor/Parish Relations Committee: Nikki Brauer, Caroline Fox, Peg Kirk, Mark Lewis, and Jim Turner.

Endowment Committee: Kelly Mirsky, Brian Finch, and Kim Tingley

Care Committee: Willemina Esenwein, Marie Genrich, Mary Beth Taylor

Garden Group: Joe Boudreaux heads up a great crew of volunteers, taking on much of the day to day work himself.

Pruyne Lectureship Committee: Chair: Mary Beth Taylor; Chrissy Cataldo, Brian Finch, Suzie Hutton, Pam Lewis Pam Lubeck, Mary Beth Taylor, Jim Wagner, Charline Watts

Social Justice Group: Joe Boudreaux, Pam Lubeck, Margaret Rutter, Julie Sullivan, Janet Warfield, Charline Watts, Linda Wilkins, and Mark Wyman.

Sunday School: Coordinator: Nikki Brauer; Teachers: Heidi Bowman, Matthew Dahmm, Suzie Hutton, Peg Kirk, and Devon Lovell.

Chapel Set-up Crew: Dahmm Family, David Hirst, Jen Ho, Sandy Hupp and Pam Unkrich, John and Peg Kirk, Mark Lewis, Margaret Rutter, Mary Beth Taylor, Kim Tingley and Ron Hardy, Jim Turner, Mark Wyman.

Thanks to everyone for all of your hard work and dedication to NCC—it is MUCH appreciated and we literally could not be the community we are without you. And if you'd like to assist or be part of any of these groups just let us know, we'd be very happy to have you join us! If we left out your name our sincere apologies — please let us know for next time!

NEWSLETTER CALL FOR NEWS

Please share reports and announcements, what you are reading and poetry you've written, or let us know of a news story we could mention.

Please email articles to Susan Ryder at normal sue@aol.com by August 20 for the September newsletter.

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Sympathy to Joe & Diane White and their family for the death of Joe's father.