



# UNITED INTOUCH

Volume No. 1, Issue No. 1

January 2009

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## PEACE AND JUSTICE SERVICE

A number of our local churches are gathering together for a Service of Peace and Justice on **Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>** at 3 p.m. at the First Baptist Church. Rev. Walther will deliver the message. Jesus calls us to minister to all those with need and we will give thanks for that ministry on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

## WOMEN'S RETREAT



Relax, unwind, take a nap, sip hot cocoa or beverage of your choice by the fire at the Women's Retreat January 23- January 25, 2009 at the Church Farm in Kingwood Township, NJ. Deborah Ogden-Ditmars will be joining us for the weekend. She looks forward to reconnecting with her friends at United. So, no excuses and just come as you are and bring your favorite book or cross-stitch. Give the church office a call if you would like to join in the weekend at the Farm. Arrangements for meals will be discussed when we have a count of who will be coming. Please call the office by January 19, 2009 then come and enjoy!

## THANK-YOU FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

December was a busy and inspiring time at United Reformed Church and many of you participated in making the Church and the events a special blessing. The concerts, that so many enjoyed, required lots of moving and rearranging and there were many willing helpers. The decorating of both the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall took several evenings and again many of you were involved. The Choirs, both voice and bell, added much to our worship services (as always) and we recognize the commitment of those talented members, along with our Director of Music Ministry. The beautiful new table that stands in front of the pulpit is the handiwork of Cliff Nagle. We are most appreciative of that gift.

A heartfelt thank you is extended to all who contributed in so many ways, as well as to our beloved Pastor whose support and vision is a joy for our Congregation. "We give thanks to God, always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and your labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Thessalonians 1:2.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I wonder how many times we have issued that salutation during the past week? Many times, no doubt, and hopefully in a spirit of enthusiasm and hope. For me there has always been something special about the arrival of a new year with its endless possibilities for growth and change. Besides, 2008 was a difficult year on a variety of fronts and many have wished it 'good riddance.'

As we enter the New Year I'd like to share a scripture passage with you from the Revelation of John – the concluding book of the New Testament. In the early chapters we come upon Seven Letters to Seven Churches and most of them are not very complementary! But when I think of United Reformed Church I think of the words written to the church of Philadelphia (3:8-9): ***'I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door which no one is able to shut; I know that you have but little power, and you have kept my word and have not denied my name.'***

What wonderful words of encouragement and hope! As one of the New Testament churches the congregation in Philadelphia was known by God, not for their size, but for their works and for their faith. Therefore, God set before them an open door which no one would be able to shut. Their faithfulness was an open door leading to unlimited ministry!

And so it is with United. As churches go we are not a mega-congregation boasting huge numbers at multiple worship services. But guess what? Like that New Testament church in Philadelphia I believe we are a dedicated congregation. I believe our Christian outreach and building use is remarkable. I believe we've been faithful to God, never wavering from our call to discipleship.

And because of those things I believe God has set before us AN OPEN DOOR WHICH NO ONE IS ABLE TO SHUT.

So, happy New Year! And as we enter 2009 let us join hands together, walk through the open door, and embrace the opportunities God has placed before the faithful men, women and children otherwise known as United Reformed Church.

Blessings,  
*Rev. Paul Walther*

## DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN?

If you have a concern, please let the Church Administrator, Sharon Thompson know. We want to remember them in our prayers and mention their name in the "In Your Prayers" reminders for the week in our Sunday bulletin.



- Thursday, January 1, 2009  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13; Psalm 8; Revelation 21:1-1-6a; Matthew 25:31-46
- Sunday, January 4  
Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20  
Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1 (1-9), 10-18
- Tuesday, January 6 (The Epiphany of the Lord)  
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
- Sunday, January 11  
Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7  
Mark 1:4-11
- Sunday, January 18  
I Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6  
13-18; I Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
- Sunday, January 25  
Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12  
I Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

## OLD PLEDGE ENVELOPES

**THE TREASURER REQUESTS THAT YOU DISPOSE OF ALL 2008 PLEDGE ENVELOPES.** The numbers are different each year and it is confusing when posting the collection. The 2008 envelopes received before January 5<sup>th</sup> were credited to 2008.

## THE NEW JERSEY GAY MEN'S CHORUS

Saturday, January 31, 2009.

First Reformed Church

9 Bayard Street

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

7:00 p.m. Silent Auction and Hors d'oeuvres

8:00 p.m. Concert

\$20.00 in advance contact 732.545.1005

Or Secretary@firstreformedchurch.net

\$25.00 at the door

\$15.00 Children and Students with ID

## THIS IS MY CHURCH

It is composed of people just like me. It will be friendly if I am. It will be a great work if I work. It will make generous gifts to many causes if I am generous. It will bring others into fellowship if I bring them. Its seats will be filled if I fill them. It will be a church of loyalty and love, of faith and service if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these. Therefore, with God's help, I dedicate myself to the task of bring all these things I want my church to be.

☞ *Old Union Reminder* ☞

## OUR SUNDAY SERVERS for January, 2009

	Ushers**	Counters	Fellowship Hour**	Altar Guild	Nursery Care***
4	Elders Serving Communion Gary Spratt Pat McKiernan	Dee Davall	Amy Stires	Alice Gunzelman	
11	Michelle Lane Elizabeth Fowler	Tom Dibble Jocelyn Eckardt	Eileen Davall Sharon Thompson	Toni Moore	
18	Toni Moore Barbara Schwarz	Pat McKiernan Sam Mendelson		Millie Moore	
25	Bill Everett Ellen Everett	Chris Parenti Jane Coleman	Barbara Schwarz Alice Gunzelman Toni Moore	Dee Davall	

\* If you can volunteer to usher, please give our Ushering Coordinator  
Gary Spratt at call at 908-252-8382.

\*\* If you can volunteer to serve coffee during Fellowship Hour, please call the church office or sign  
up following worship during our Fellowship Hour.

There are no volunteers scheduled for the Nursery. If you are interested in this ministry, please give  
the church office a call.

The sympathy and prayers of the United Reformed Church are with the families of



Charles Euston who passed away on December 24, 2008 and Karen M. Quinn who passed away on December 31, 2008. Charlie attended worship regularly until he relocated to

Connecticut to live with his daughter. Karen was a member of United and will be missed by her friends and family.

Our prayers are with the family at this time. Remember all of life, from its beginning to its end, is in God's hands and through the power of Christ's resurrection, the end becomes a new beginning in God's full promise.

## UNITED INTOUCH DEADLINE

If you have information that you would like included in the February, 2009 issue of INTOUCH, please contact Sharon Thompson at (908) 725-4545, e-mail her at [sharon.thom@yahoo.com](mailto:sharon.thom@yahoo.com), or put your article in the INTOUCH mailbox.

The “**must have**” **deadline** for articles is Monday, January 26, 2009

## CROSSROADS XXV

Mark your calendars for the Women’s Retreat at Harvey Cedars Conference Center in Long Beach Island on April 17-18, 2009. Keynote speaker will be Michelle Cavinder, Director of Women’s Ministries at the Crystal Cathedral. More information in the next newsletter. See flyer posted in hall at URC for additional details.

## DATES TO REMEMBER IN

Thursday, January 1, 2009	New Year’s Day – Office Closed
Friday, January 2	Office Closed
Sunday, January 4	10:00 a.m. Worship (Holy Communion) 1100 a.m. Fellowship Hour
Monday, January 5	Intouch Deadline
Wednesday, January 7	7:30 p.m. Worship Committee
Thursday, January 8	10:00 a.m. Collage Intouch 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir
Sunday, January 11	9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour
Tuesday, January 13	7:30 p.m. Administration and Finance Committee
Thursday, January 15	7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir
Sunday, January 18	9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour 7:30 p.m. Reflection Ringers
Monday, January 19	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
Tuesday, January 20	7:30 p.m. Consistory Meeting
Wednesday, January 21	7:00 p.m. Investment Committee
Thursday, January 22	7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir
Friday, January 23	12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. SHIP’s Galley (URC hosts)
Sunday, January 25	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School/Mother’s Time 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour 3:00 p.m. Community Peace and Justice Service At The First Baptist Church, High Street, Somerville
Monday, January 26	6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:30 p.m. Reflection Ringers
Thursday, January 29	INTOUCH DEADLINE 10:00 a.m. Collate Intouch 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

# ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE YEAR END REPORT

**Stewardship Campaign:** *United on the Move.* The URC budget for 2009 was approved by the Consistory at \$356,000. Congregational Giving accounts for 35 % of the total. As of December 31<sup>st</sup> \$105,000 had been pledged with another \$24,000 anticipated. We hope that those who have delayed registering their commitment will come forward so that we can move into the New Year with confidence.

Another portion of the income (31%) currently is provided by using the corpus of the Investment Portfolio. We, the members of URC, need to do our part by assisting in attracting new members and increasing our giving. If we are not successful in the above activities, the Investment Portfolio will eventually be depleted and URC's ability to withstand hard times severely diminished.

The remaining portion of URC's income (34%) is derived from earnings from the portfolio, special events and rent paid for use of URC's facilities. In regard to the latter, fees for the church building and the Farm have been adjusted to achieve a simpler fee structure and a more equitable level of fees for the Farm. For more information and details see the application forms on file in the church office.

Code	URC Rooms	Rental Fee	Notes
1	Fellowship Hall	\$145.00	+ \$30.00 Custodian Fee
2	Fellowship Hall with Kitchen	\$200.00	+ \$30.00 Custodian Fee
3	Basement Recreation Room	\$90.00	
4	Meeting Room for Small Group	\$60.00	
5	Lounge	\$115.00	
6	Sanctuary without use of Organ	\$290.00	+ \$45.00 Custodian Fee
7	Sanctuary with use of Organ	\$350.00	+ \$45.00 Custodian Fee
<b>Fees for Weddings</b>		See policy on Deposits and Custodian	
8	Minister – Non Members	\$230.00	
9	Organist	\$230.00	

The Farm		Weekend Fee	Weekday Daily Fee
Active URC Members	2 Nights	\$90.00	\$45.00
	3 Nights	\$135.00	
	4 Nights	\$180.00	
Other Churches	2 Nights	\$180.00	\$90.00
	3 Nights	\$270.00	
	4 Nights	\$360.00	
Other Entities	2 Nights	\$300.00	\$150.00
	3 Nights	\$450.00	
	4 Nights	\$600.00	

A and F continues to work with the Investment Committee and all other committees to manage church financial assets to pursue the important and multifaceted mission of URC in outreach, Christian education, worship and fellowship. The continued support of all members and friends of United, both financially and with contributions of time and talent, will ensure that United will continue to grow and flourish.

Bill Everett, Chair, A and F Committee

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**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday  
9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
**Lunch Hour:** 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

In December, the Sunday School completed the Preparation for Celebration unit as they learned the symbols and their meanings for the Christmas season. During the December 21<sup>st</sup> church service, the children put on a Christmas pageant for the congregation in which they re-enacted the story of the Nativity. It was a meaningful way to bring the Christmas story to life. Now we are in the Epiphany season, which is the time Jesus was made known to the people as God's Anointed One. As we start the new calendar year, we will be learning about Jesus' baptism and how it started his new life as a teacher.

Amy Stires



Sunday School enacting the nativity at worship.



Youth Group selling water and cookies during the Peter Mayer concert in December.

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