

High Country

United Church of Christ



Photo by Rhonda Lorence

Hope Shall Bloom... and it did! By Shelly Wilson

“After three hurricanes in succession blasted across five states, from Florida and Alabama to Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, the UCC’s initial commitment was to be on the Gulf Coast for five years,” says Florence Coppola, UCC Executive for National Disaster Ministries, “but now it will be for six years. At the end of 2011, the UCC office in New Orleans will close, but the work will continue. We are searching for a local agency partner who is rebuilding homes so that UCC volunteer work groups may continue the work that was started.” Hours after the hurricane hit, the UCC congregations contributed \$25,000 to the relief effort, and since, over \$6,127, 193 in contributions have been given, along with countless

numbers of volunteer hours.

The relief effort was entitled “Hope Shall Bloom” and it helped to rebuild homes, businesses, and churches. Our own church contributed seven trips, and many, many hours and dollars to the effort over the five years. The UCC General Minister and President, the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black said, “Your gifts do make a difference. I’ve seen with my own eyes the real, concrete, tangible difference your generosity has made in the lives of people.”

THANK YOU, High Country UCC for helping in the relief efforts in Florida, Mississippi, and Louisiana after the hurricanes!

Volunteers Needed!

We have jobs and opportunities for you at High Country UCC!

Check it out...

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Wish List for Volunteers



Here are some volunteers we need to make our ministry even better! One of these might be YOUR job!

Greeter: welcome people, visitors and members alike. Show new folks where everything is!

Church directory caretaker: the directory is maintained in a very easy “Instant Church Directory” format. We just need someone to keep it current—take and download photos of folks not in there!

Media writer: someone to submit public service announcements about our church’s activities as often as possible—letting people know about a place THEY can belong

Film coordinator: someone to do the webstreaming once a month of a sermon and put it up on our website. (Elaine can help you!)

More Volunteer Opportunities

- Teach a Sunday School class for a short series, or on an “on-call/substitute” basis—all age groups.
- Help with service projects in community.
- Help with coffee hour/refreshments after church
- Help with nursery care of babies/toddlers
- Help with building maintenance
- Help with music, altar, other leadership for worship services
- Help with peace and justice

New Church Website

Special, special thanks to Ann Kiefert and Elaine Gray for the wonderful new look and many additional features on our church website! It looks and navigates like a dream—Check it out and share widely...

<http://highcountryucc.org>

HOSPITALITY CAFE —SAVE THE DATE

FARM Cafe will once again partner with Hospitality House to provide a meal to the public on Thursday, September 8th. Call 264-1237 to save your seat for the 5:30, 6:15, or 7:00 seating. The meal is free, but donations are accepted. Anyone who'd like to volunteer in the kitchen or dining room, please contact Angela at harrisaj1@email.apstate.edu

CONTACT OUR CHURCH COUNCIL Moderator Chris at cmay060994@aol.com if you would like to accept a job! Thanks!!

“Living in the Light” Photo Exhibition by John Scarlata at the Turchin Arts Center

We celebrate with our dear ones, Silas, Wyatt, and Rebecca Keeter at the opening of the photo exhibition of John Scarlata’s photography, featured at the Turchin Arts Center, beginning September 2 and continuing through January, 2012. Many of you remember John with love

and fondness, and we all love his family in our midst!

For more information on the exhibit see <http://www.turchincenter.org/exhibitions/501>

See you at Art Crawl on a Friday!

Middle School Youth of the Month

Aidan Powers

Youth of the Month (middle grades) for September is Aidan Powers, son of Rosa and Alan Powers, brother of Dargan Powers. Luna (dog) and Marbles (cat) also live at Aidan's house. "Aidan", pronounced AY-den, is of Gaelic origin, and has been translated as "fire". It is also the name of a seventh century bishop of Ferns (Saint Aidan of Ireland) who was known for his kindness and generosity. Our Aidan is a 6th grader at Two Rivers Community School and his middle name is Edwards, which is Rosa's mother's maiden name.

Aidan's favorite book is Fish, by Gregory Mone (who happens to be Irish-American)

www.fishthepirate.com/. "It's about pirates, which is pretty interesting, and treasure-hunting... like Treasure Island, so I think that's pretty cool and it's also an adventure, which is fun for me... I really like adventure books."

This novel follows the adventures of a young pirate, named Maurice Reidy, who is nicknamed "Fish" because of his incredible swimming ability.

Aidan's favorite movie is "Despicable Me", a computer-animated 3D comedy film which features the voice of Steve Carell as "Gru."

Aidan's favorite TV show is "Adventure Time."

Aidan likes to be outside, playing basketball, jumping on the trampoline and hanging out with friends. He also enjoys drawing. Aidan is passionate about learning and about nature and about running. Aidan describes a "great day" as one that started out doing something fun at school, "maybe, like in science, we did an experiment... and then, also, I got away with not a lot of homework. That would be nice so I had a lot of time to do what I wanted to do."

When I asked Aidan what he liked about Two Rivers School, he mentioned the PE program and, specifically, the running and their "great coach - Coach Pack. It's just really fun - He does a lot of stuff with us and the teachers are

really nice as well. I really like the teachers. They're a good mix of fun, nice, but strict enough to keep the class in order. And, also, we don't get piled with a bunch of homework." After taking a fair amount of time to consider the question, "Who is someone you admire and what do you admire about them?", Aidan responded, "I think... my brother. He's sort of like the person I'd like to be. He's really athletic and he's got a good sense of humor. And he's a lot of fun to be around."

Things that make Aidan look forward to coming to church include "doing fun things and seeing Elias." Aidan particularly liked the Sunday School lesson where they drew what they would consider to be the "super hero inside of us".

Aidan thinks it would be cool if our Youth Group went on another field trip like the one the Tweens recently took to Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute at Lees McRae. I asked Aidan what he likes about our church. "Well, Shelly is great. Her sermons are just fantastic. I really like that about our church and, also, that it's not extremely fancy. You don't have to wear a suit and tie when you go there."

Thanks for the interview, Aidan! And congratulations on being a Youth of the Month! *Written By Allan Johnson*



MISSION TRIP AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH UCC

By Chris May

Through the act of foot washing, Jesus made clear God's call to serve others. We are invited to ministries of service that reflect God's love by responding to the needs of the world and involving ourselves in efforts to challenge injustices. The logo of the towel and basin reminds us of God's call to serve.

The Partners in Service program offered through the Volunteer Ministries Office of the United Church of Christ provides a variety of opportunities for service in diverse settings, such as camps/conferences, disaster areas, homeless shelters, youth groups, and local communities. Volunteers serve terms of two weeks to a year or more. Opportunities are open to adults of all ages, 19-89, who are eager to serve and have a willingness to learn and to gain a better understanding of themselves serve as full-time volunteers.

NATIONAL SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

UCC Young Adult Service Communities Periods: June - August and September - May

Long-Term Partners in Service Volunteers (9-12 months) Periods: September - August and January - December

Short-Term Partners in Service Volunteers (2-8 months) Period: Begin throughout year

Summer Partners in Service Volunteers Period: End of May through mid-August

Complete introductory on-line application for Partners in Service available at

www.ucc.org/volunteer/volunteer-on-line-application.html

Volunteer placements with international partners are available through the Global Ministries Office of Mission Personnel. Global Mission Interns are recent college graduates appointed for one to three years, working with church agencies or ecumenical partners in ministry with the poor, or working with Christian action groups dealing with Human rights, reconciliation and development projects.

www.globalministries.org under "People in Mission."





High School Youth of the Month

Julianna Wilson Bond

Julianna Wilson Bond is the high school HCUCC Youth of the Month. Julianna, “peaceful, soft-haired & youthful” (various interpretations of the literal meaning of “Julianna”), is the daughter of Shelly Wilson and the late Larry Bond. Born in Mao Ming City, China on May 25, 1995, Julianna is currently an 11th grader at Watauga High School. If you have not yet heard Shelly’s story of her adoption of Julianna at 18 months of age, you’re in for a heart-warming story when you do have the great good fortune to hear it, as are we upon each re-telling.

Julianna’s favorite movie is “Up” by Disney-Pixar. “It’s just very adorable and, I feel like, out of a lot of movies that have come out recently, it has really hit the emotional effects for all ages, not just a silly movie for kids to watch... and, it’s just a great story.” Julianna’s favorite book is To Kill A Mockingbird, by Harper Lee, “because of the whole issue it covers and the writing style... It’s very well written.”

When she has the time & opportunity to do whatever she wants to do, Julianna chooses to “practice my clarinet or play the piano, because I really enjoy music and making music. And, recently, I’ve been catching up and actually getting ahead in homework just cause there’s always so much.” Julianna is passionate about “cross country and just running in general because, for one, I really enjoy it and the team aspect... I feel I need to do my part, trying the hardest I can and running to the best of my ability and also just the whole fitness aspect of it. No matter what sport you do or, in general, even if you don’t do a sport, I feel like exercising is important to living a well-rounded life.” For fun, Julianna plays her instrument and tries to make time to hang out with her friends. She feels that, especially in the midst of a busy school year, “it’s nice to just set that aside and relax with your friends... go to each other’s house and watch movies or go to the park.”

Julianna describes a “great day” as “involving any aspect of going outside and enjoying nature and I think a ‘great day’ would have to involve ultimate Frisbee. That’s also one of my passions... I love hanging out with my friends and playing ultimate Frisbee.”

Over the next two years, Julianna’s goals include graduating from high school near the top of her class and getting into a college. At present, Julianna is particularly interested in Elon, UNC-Wilmington and College of Charleston. Before going off to college, during the summer after her senior year, Julianna hopes to travel with Shelly and Diane.

Julianna particularly admires her mother “because she is able to juggle so much... just in general, in her life... with her parents and also with work and school and still be able to come home and provide for me and Diane. To have all that going on in her life and still have time for her family... I just think that’s admirable.”

Regarding HCUCC, Julianna likes “how inclusive our church is... how people can come from many different backgrounds and have different life stories but yet, they’ll still be welcome. I really enjoy that part.” Regarding HCUCC Youth Group, Julianna enjoys “anything that we do... because we have such great charisma (*substitute “chemistry” here?*)... Everyone in there is just really fun and I enjoy their company and one thing that I enjoy most of all is whenever we have group discussions.” Julianna went on to talk about the diverse philosophical wisdom that comes from the group as they cover a variety of topics and how she “enjoys just our fun conversations too.”

Julianna also spoke of how an international mission trip, in general, would be good for our Youth Group and her hopes that our recent discussions of a possible trip to Bolivia in summer 2012 will come to fruition. Thanks for the interview Julianna! And congrats on being a HCUCC Youth of the Month!

Written By Allan Johnson

When I'm looking
through my lens
I like to find
"artifacts"
illustrating the
impermanence of
humanity and the
hope that nature
will someday win
back the Earth.
- Tom Whyte



Tom Whyte capture this unique photo of a shoe sole that was washed up on the beach at Surf City, Topsail Island, NC.

Grok in Fullness

By Judith Kobler

In the 60's, *Stranger in a Strange Land* became a cult favorite. It coined the expression "Grok in fullness." My work friends all read the book and adopted the expression in the same way people today might say "cool." To "grok in fullness" is to understand something fully and have complete empathy with it. I liked the concept then and I still do. In recent years I haven't met many who recall the book or the expression. The book is probably dated and would be unlikely to have a widespread audience now.

Nevertheless some are still reading it, as it has never gone out of print

I had forgotten the significance that expression had in my life until last week when Steve Jobs resigned as CEO of Apple. In reading through notes about his life, I learned *Stranger in a Strange Land* had been a favorite of his too and we had also [BTW] shared a mutual affection for Joan Baez. I bought my first MAC in 1984 and so I think in small ways he and I have been simpatico. He has been a visionary I have truly admired and despite reports of his difficult personality, he is someone I would like to know.

But...I digress! Today in church Shelly blew me away with another of her wonderful, thought provoking and motivating sermons. Although she touched many chords, two were particularly relevant for me and especially in light of my recent recall of "grok in fullness." The first was the extraordinary soulful connection I feel from looking into the eyes of my little dogs. Their unspoken, but complete empathy touches that part of me that is undeniably spirit. The second reference was to the movie *E.T.* (and a fast-forward to 1982) when the extra-terrestrial said, "with the touch of a finger and a point to your heart, "I'll be right here.""



"*Stranger*," "*E.T.*" and Shelly's sermon explore empathy between beings from other planets, between humans and animals, between our inter-actions in our day-to-day and in all these scenarios, there is a yearning to connect. It is the unconditional wish to feel our uniqueness as an individual and our oneness with the universe. Although being able to "Grok in fullness" is sometimes a challenge on a regular basis, it is also what brings us together when we come to church. Church is my way of saying that whatever my own personal failings may be, and however much I sometimes disappoint myself, I have a place to go and be with people who share the willingness to be vulnerable and imperfect and continue to want to be the best they can be.

Thanks to all of you for making High Country UCC a welcoming, giving, caring sanctuary.

The Eight Day of Creation is Coming Soon!

Sign up NOW for this HUGE fun and HIGHLY creative weekend event September 16-18th at our Church. You can **review the complete schedule of events on page 8**. Contact Sondra Edwards at ebaedwards@gmail.com and let her know your coming and what events you want to participate in.

At our ARTS WEEKEND, we will be jamming with drums led by Chris Osmond on Friday evening beginning at 8:00 p.m. followed by a Drive In Movie at 9:00 in our own church yard.

On Saturday night we will be jamming with fiddles, guitars..... all musicians are invited to play. No rehearsal needed.

This is your official invitation. Maybe we can recreate the musical energy we shared on our Anniversary Sunday.



Please continue to save your aluminum cans for the youth group. Recycled aluminum is paying 65 cents a pound right now. Shelton and I took ninety-five pounds of cans recently and earned \$59 for the youth. Place your bags of cans next to the shed located between the church and annex buildings. Thanks!

CONTRIBUTE TO THIS NEWLETTER!!!

Please consider sharing your talents with our congregation through your written and artistic contributions. Our newsletter allows us to share in the communion of our words and images and most importantly get to know each other through these gifts. October deadline is 10/6. Please send your wondrous works to Elaine at

jelainegray@gmail.com THANK YOU!

"The Eighth Day of Creation"

"Creativeness in the world is, as it were, the eighth day of creation."~ Nicolas Berdyaev

Name/s _____

e-mail _____

I will attend the entire weekend of Sept. 16-18. _____

I will attend on Friday, Sept. 16, only. _____

I will attend on Saturday, Sept. 17, only. _____

I need a campsite. _____ I will need childcare _____

Schedule and sessions (check your sessions and meals)

Friday, Sept. 16

- 5:00p** **Set up camp sites** _____
- 6:00** **Supper** _____
- 7:00-8:00** **Pottery** (Loretta Link) _____ **Movie Making** (Allan Johnson) _____
- Dulcimers** (Sondra Edwards) _____
- 8:00- 9:00** **Drum Circle in Sanctuary** (Chris Osmond) _____
- 9:00** **Drive In Movie....outside...**bring lawn chairs _____

Saturday Sept. 17

- 7:30a** **Breakfast** _____ prepared by Chris May
- 8:30-10:30 a** **Photography** (Dawn) _____ **Collage** (Joanne Osmond) _____
- 10 -11:30** **Jewelry** (Lauri and Alice Whyte) _____ **"Devil sticks"** (Diane Lasley) _____
- 11:30 -12:30** **Lunch** _____
- 12:30-2:00p** **Peace Poles** (Megan Long) _____ **(must pre-register)**
- 2:00** **TRIP TO VALLE CRUCIS PARK** ...initiatives, hiking, playing and watermelon _____
- 5:00** **Supper** at church _____
- 6:00-7:00** **Creative Writing** (Joseph Bathanti) _____, **Art** (Dacia Therewey) _____
- 7:00-8:00** **Haiku and Movement** (ASU student) _____
- Mc Eligott's Pool Dr. Seuss Theology** (Marcia Cham) _____
- 8:00-9:00** **Jam Session** with guitars and folk instruments (Jennifer) _____
- 9:00** **Campfire, S'mores** _____
- 10:00** **Lights out!!!!**

Sunday, Sept. 18

- 7:30-8:30a** **Breakfast** _____ prepared by Ann Kiefert

Barb Who?

By Jeanne Tayloe



Barb Beuttel was genuinely touched by the generosity displayed by the congregation in the love offering that was given for her. As we were talking, she mentioned that there were a lot of new faces in the congregation. We thought perhaps some of the newer folks might appreciate a little information about how Barb has reached this point on her life journey. It's possible some of the longer term folks might also like to know a little more. This article is a collaborative effort between Barb & myself.

Barb was born a little over fifty years ago in Miami Florida. (This explains how she became a Miami Dolphins fan.) She earned a Bachelor's degree at ASU. After graduation, she began her employment at the Psychiatric Unit at Cannon Memorial Hospital in Banner Elk. She then moved to Atlanta and worked at an outdoor treatment center for children with behavioral issues. While finishing her Master's degree at UNC Greensboro, she worked at a battered women's shelter in High Point. Counseling was her area of concentration for her graduate degree. After graduation she began working for Summit House in Greensboro. Summit House was a residential community corrections program for non-violent women offenders and their children. This facility allowed children to remain with their mothers while the women were serving their time. Barb was responsible for the development of this program. She also interviewed women all over North Carolina and selected the candidates for participation. In 1993, as director, she received an award for outstanding creativity and dedication. This program is still in existence, but has been taken over by the State of North Carolina.

Barb was unhappy working as an administrator, so she then went to work as an *in home* child and family therapist. She later focused her efforts on abused kids at a mental health center. Understandably, the job took its toll. The number of sexually abused kids was overwhelming and Barb was just not able to deal with it any more. At this point her life changed forever. This is when she started to deal with her own mental illness. The recommendation of a former client led Barb to McLean Hospital in Boston for treatment. She spent a year and a half there involved in both residential and out patient treatment.

When Barb returned to Boone she lived with her family. Unfortunately, her sexual identity and irreconcilable differences, led to estrangement from them. This is when Barb began to lean on a network of friends and her church family for support. She attributes both of these support systems for improving the quality of her life and her longevity. Barb credits Melanie Childers with leading her to the doors of HCUCC.

In addition to bearing the burden of mental illness, she began experiencing symptoms similar to multiple sclerosis. About two years ago, she also began having painful and noticeable problems with her neck. Various treatments both locally and in Charlotte have not been successful. Diabetes and subsequent diagnosis of gastroparesis has resulted in a very narrow and limited diet.

Barb Who? ...Continued from page 9

It appears as if her background and experience in counseling served her well in dealing with her recent traumatic events. Barb has continued to express empathy for the previous victim(s) of her assailant. She is determined to prevent this man from causing future harm to anyone else. If her case does go to trial, she is prepared to testify if necessary. It may be over a year before this case is resolved.

Barb presently resides in Meadow Hill Apartments. She hopes to move from there to Watauga Village. This would allow her to live in the same complex as her best friend, Rachel. She is at the top of the waiting list. The generous financial offering given by the congregation is truly a blessing. It will provide the security deposit necessary in order to make this move a reality. Moving will allow Barb to begin the next chapter of her life in a new environment.

She sincerely appreciates the continued support from her friends and church family. These groups contribute to her emotional health. Additionally, food, transportation, apartment cleaning, cat watching, lodging, moving assistance, technology set up and furniture items from RAM have all made life a little easier for Barb.



Barb attempts to serve others even though her mobility and concentration are hindered. This is the third time she has grown her hair long enough for it to be donated to Locks of Love. She serves as a channel operator for a chat room for abuse survivors. She has also served on the Church Council as one of the nurture team co-leaders.

Even now, Barb perseveres as an educator. She continues to educate me (and perhaps some of you) about mental illness. Because of Barb, I now have a much better understanding of bi-polar disorder. I am much more aware of the intricate balance between managing the illness and maintaining the ability to function in everyday life.

So while Barb is thanking all of you, I would like to thank Barb for her willingness to share about her illness.