

Pastors Report 2008

On a personal level the year 2008 was a year of great changes for me and I appreciate the prayers and support offered by the congregation. On Feb. 8, I had successful surgery for prostate cancer and now I am, by the Grace of God, cancer free. I am especially thankful to Rev. Robert Parrish, Chair of the Deacons, for holding things together in my absence during recovery. Also, to Robert, Steve Camp (our Conference Minister), Hunter Thompson, and Sue Rogge for preaching on those Sundays I was out.

On Oct. 31st Marcy and I became first time grandparents when our daughter Elizabeth and her husband Matt welcomed Avery Ella Black into God's World at Rex Hospital here in Raleigh. Being a grandparent has given me new inspiration to do Children's Messages on Sunday mornings!

Back in January, I became Chair of the Interfaith Power and Light Program of the NC Council of Churches. In May we lost our Director, Alice Loyd to retirement and I became deeply involved in finding her replacement. Finally in Sept. we hired Jill Rios which has already proven to be a fine choice. NCIPL and our "Justice in a Changing Climate Initiative" have had a mutually supportive relationship that has born good fruit. (see JCC report)

In March we held a special "Farewell Service" and reception for Pastor Nsumbu Puati who was called back to the Congo. We continue to correspond with him and have begun to develop new understandings of the problems faced in the Congo and how we may be of greater support to them.

In July I participated for the first time as a Camp Director of 5th and 6th graders for a week, and plan to do the same this coming summer. It is my hope to have more children from CUCC attend these wonderful camps.

In October we celebrated the Ordination of Luis Alvarenga whom we had supported toward Ministry. He now serves an Ecumenical calling in St. Paul Minn.

In December with the support of the Deacons we held three new Advent Events that were very meaningful and enjoyable to me, and I would encourage you to consider attending next year.

January 2009 has already started off in an impressive way as we rededicated our church after the completion of significant renovations that are reported by the Property Ministry. Thanks to all who made that possible especially Joan McAllister who very diligently oversaw the various projects and Mike Evans who visited us first as a worker and now plans to stay and join CUCC. God truly moves in mysterious ways!

Thanks and Kudos to our great staff who hold together the great diversity of Ministry accomplished each year at CUCC: Carol Clark, Doug Barrick, Anne Moorman-Smith, Anne Bailey Zschau, Santi Matthews, and Dani Sandor