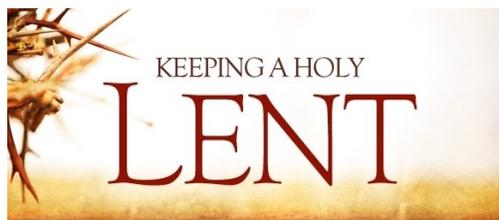


First United Methodist Church  
 264 North Main Street  
 Rutherfordton, NC 28139  
 www.fumcrutherfordton.org  
 Vol. 6, No. 7

# The First Word



## Community Services for Rutherfordton

### Wednesday - Noon

<u>Date</u>	<u>Host Church</u>	<u>Invited Speaker</u>
March 7	St. Gabriel Episcopal Church	Rev. Jacob Teasdell
March 14	First United Methodist Church	Rev. Arrie Melvin
March 21	Rutherfordton Presbyterian	Dr. Scott Courtney
March 28	No Wednesday service in Holy Week	

### Good Friday Services - March 30th

Noon	St. Francis Episcopal Church
7:00 pm	First United Methodist Church

### Easter Sunrise Service - April 1st at 7:00 am

Rutherfordton Town Cemetery    Rev. Reginald Coffey  
 Followed by Breakfast at First United Methodist Church

### Easter Worship Service - April 1st at 11:00 am (no early service)

First United Methodist Church – Dr. Sydnor Thompson

## THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME

### — A Pastoral Word from Sydnor

I'm writing this on February 14<sup>th</sup>, a day that is both Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday. For many of us, the themes of Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday may seem incompatible—and perhaps that's true on a surface level. But I think there is something interesting in this coincidental association of love and death. Perhaps we usually approach death as something to be feared, as a force threatening to annihilate us. What if death is more an entry way, a portal to the deep and wide embrace of the God, from whom we come and to whom all of us will one day return.

One of the ways that the return of cancer has impacted my life is to make every day a sort of Ash Wednesday. The words, "remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return" ring loud in my ears when I reflect on my metastatic cancer diagnosis. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not being morbid. I am confident in the healing powers of God's Spirit and so grateful for your continued prayers for my healing. I fully expect to be cured from this illness.

But I am also a realist and I know that a Stage Four metastasis is a serious progression in this disease of colon cancer. So, despite my faith and optimism, I hear the message, "remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" loud and clear.

And then Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day come along on the same day, and I realize that the message is not just one of death's nearness; it is also the message of God's nearness. One thing Kelly and I have found in this journey with cancer is that we are surrounded by love. So many of you have gone out of your way to meet our needs and to remind us that you are there for us. How blessed we are! Our experience of my cancer's return has opened us not only to the wonder of being loved in community, but also to the wonder of God's love that surrounds us and sustains us and assures us that he is with us now and forever.

Carl Jung says that life is like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Shoots come forth from the rhizome and flower and flourish for a season, but eventually each must wither and die; "but the rhizome remains."

This Lenten season reminds us that our little ego project of life on this earth is only for a season. We come from God and we return to God. He is our hope, and he is our salvation. And so, we praise him for the gift of this day and place our lives in his hands, trusting that he is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Lenten blessings,



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### SYDNOR AND KELLY THANK YOU!

How blessed we have been in recent days to receive the gift of your love and prayers. In so many ways, you have embraced and held us as we have faced surgery and treatment for Sydnor's cancer. We are so very thankful to be in a community where we are surrounded by such love and care. It has made all the difference! We want you to know that we deeply appreciate the many ways you have loved us and continue to be there for us. God has blessed us through you. Thank you for your love and prayers.

Sydnor and Kelly

## CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, March 30th. Thank you

## MUSIC NEWS

The Chancel Choir will present the sacred cantata, **The Seven Last Words of Christ** by Theodore Dubois, on Palm Sunday, March 25. The cantata continues to be a masterpiece usually performed during the final week of Lent. The work refers to the seven short phrases (often called "words") said by Jesus on the cross. These phrases are taken from the four Christian Gospels, Luke 23:34, 23:43, 23:45, John 19:26-27, 19:28, 19:30, Matthew 27:45 and Mark 15:34.

We welcome those who would like to participate in the presentation to rehearsals each Wednesday evening generally at 7:30 for the cantata and on Sundays immediately after the 11:00 service on February 25, March 4 (1:30), and possibly March 18.

## HOSPICE HAPPENINGS

Have you ever thought about being a volunteer at Hospice but don't think you have any skills to become one? At Hospice of the Carolina Foothills, your skills will be put to good use! You can help support the patients needs in many ways. For example, volunteers are needed to support patients in such roles as visiting, reading, taking walks, writing letters, bringing in music, and therapeutic visits with pets and massage therapy. Why not give Hospice a call today (800-218-2273) or go online at [www.hocf.org](http://www.hocf.org) to submit a volunteer application form. You will be glad you did!

**THE AGAPE CIRCLE** will meet at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, March 13th at the Perry-Moore House. Joy Deck will present the program and Caroline Edwards will provide a light refreshment. All women of the church are invited to join us.



**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**Operation Inasmuch  
Saturday, May 19, 2018**

### MISSION EASTER LILY ORDER FORM

We have the opportunity to give the designated amount of \$10.00 in honor or in memory of a loved one or friend. The list will be shared in the Sunday morning bulletin on Easter, April 1st and it will also be attached to the church e-mail on March 29th and April 5th. Monies collected will be used for Friendship Club.

I (we) would like to be a part of the Easter Mission.

In Honor Of \_\_\_\_\_

Given By \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor Of \_\_\_\_\_

Given By \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of \_\_\_\_\_

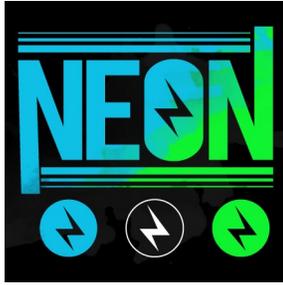
Given By \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of \_\_\_\_\_

Given By \_\_\_\_\_

All donations must be received **NO LATER** than Sunday, March 25th.

# YOUTH NEWS



**NEON** meets on Sunday Nights from 5:00-7:00 pm in the Youth Center! Come shine Christ's light through Bible study, games, food, and fellowship! Doors open at 4:30 and dinner begins at 5:00!

## THIS MONTH



We may not like to admit it, but we all have questions and doubts about our faith. In this series, you'll help teenagers see that our doubts and questions don't have to destroy our faith, but refusing to talk about them might. For the next four weeks, we'll encourage teenagers to wrestle with their doubts by **voicing their questions, understanding their perspective is limited, remembering how Jesus has transformed their lives, and considering why they followed Jesus in the first place.**

Keep up with everything happening in FUMC's Youth Ministry! Sign up for our Text Updates!



\*Standard text message rates apply.

**WANT THE CHANCE TO HAVE LUNCH BROUGHT TO YOU AT SCHOOL?** Every time you come to a youth event, you can enter for the chance to have lunch brought to you by Beau! You can get information forms directly from Beau or you can find it on the church website.

# YOUTH COUNCIL

MARCH 4TH @ 12:15 IN THE YOUTH CENTER

## HEBREWS MORNING DEVOTION



**HeBrews** meets before school from 6:30-7:15 am at the Boy Scout Hut. Come start your day off right and enjoy a mid-week pick-me-up of coffee, breakfast, and a youth-led devotion!



## MOTHER & SON BOWLING BASH

April 22nd @ Autumn Lanes  
5:00-7:00 pm

Reserve Your Lane: <https://goo.gl/PVwc2v>  
**\$20 REGISTRATION FEE (+\$5 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL SON)**

# PASSPORTmissions

**PASSPORT MISSION TRIP  
JULY 2-7, 2018**

**Total Cost: \$429 (all inclusive)**

This summer's mission experience will be in Greenville, SC from July 2-7. The total cost for this trip is **\$429. Registration is due with a \$50 deposit by March 4th.** We also need adults to help lead on this trip! Download a registration form here: <https://goo.gl/bJmRdw>

We must have at least **6** Camper & **4** Chaperone Registrations by **March 4th** for our group to be able to go on this Mission Trip.

**Be sure to check our website and Facebook page, Instagram, & Twitter to stay up on what's happening in our ministry!**

# CHILDREN'S CORNER

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school starts at 9:45 in the SHINE Room on the 1st Floor for games, music, and our week's Bible Story. Lots of fun things happening each week - crafts, games, and most importantly, Jesus!



This month our 252 Basics theme is "Jump Ball: Finding the Peace in the Madness" where our children will learn that "Peace is proving you care more about each other than winning and argument." Kids will hear stories like "Go Your Own Way (Abram Makes Peace; Genesis 13:5-18), "Walk on By" (Isaac's Wells; Genesis 26:1-6, 12-22, 26-31), "Give Peace a Chance" (Abigail Intervenes; 1 Samuel 25:1-35), "Let there be Peace on Earth" (God Made Peace with Us; Colossians 3:15).



During the 11:00 am service, all children are invited to come to sit at the altar for Children's Time with Rufus the Rabbit to hear a kid-geared Bible lesson! After Children's Time, all children ages 4 through 2nd Grade will be invited to go with our adult volunteers to the SHINE Room for the duration of the service for activities, crafts, storytelling, games and more as children learn on their level about Jesus and the church.



Be sure to check our website and Facebook page to see what's happening in our ministries!

## Children's Council

March 25th @ 12:15 in the Youth Center

### VOLUNTEER

Interested in volunteering on Sunday mornings in our Children's Ministry? There are SO many ways that you can be a part of this growing ministry. **You can still volunteer without giving up your Sunday School class or service experiences every Sunday.** YOU can make a difference in our church and ministry by serving our children! Let us know how you might like to serve: <https://www.jotform.com/beaulunceford/fumc-ministry-volunteer-submission> OR email [blunceford@fumcrutherfordton.org](mailto:blunceford@fumcrutherfordton.org)



Wednesdays 3:30-5:00

This Spring we are excited to have started a short-term (7 week) program beginning for children ages 4-5th grades.

Through fun, storytelling, music, and much more, this program will encourage a rock-solid spiritual foundation that will equip kids to go out into the world to shine Christ's Light!



### MOTHER & SON BOWLING BASH

April 22nd @ Autumn Lanes

5:00-7:00 pm

Don't strike out... Come join the fun! Spend the evening with your son(s) creating great memories with pizza, laughter, and bowling! Registration includes unlimited games, shoes, pizza, and drinks Prizes for the highest score and best team outfits!

Reserve your lane now!

Reserve Your Lane: <https://goo.gl/PVwc2v>  
\$20 REGISTRATION FEE (+\$5 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL SON)

Watch [fumcrutherfordton.org](http://fumcrutherfordton.org) and First Kids on Facebook and Instagram for more information!

## STORIES OF CHRIST'S LIGHT SHINING

The darker the room; the brighter the light of a single candle!

The darker the situation; the brighter the light of Christ. As a church family we experienced this first hand as Sydnor told us, on a January Sunday morning, of his recent cancer diagnosis.

I don't think I've felt Christ's presence in our sanctuary any stronger than it was that Sunday. Even among our shock, our worry, our sadness for our minister and friend, there was an air of confidence and spiritual trust about him that seemed to say, "This is the way it is, and I know who's in charge." But it couldn't have been an easy announcement to make.

If you weren't present that Sunday, you've read Sydnor's open letter to his church family and now know the details. He is very aware that his treatment will impact our church and its mission as well as he & his family, but he's trusting the God who sent his son to be the light "on Main Street and beyond!"

Sydnor is very open about what's going on and how he feels about it. He doesn't deny that this is a challenge and that he's faced his share of those. "But God is always there," he said. "God has blessed me with spiritual resources. I know that I'm not alone."

"Experiencing adversity is an invitation to rely on the spiritual depths that sustain us," he continued. "But a loving environment helps. I feel that here and appreciate your prayers. I talk about trusting God. Now I have to do it!" he concluded.

The darkness in this situation has not overcome the light of Christ. It continues to shine, signifying the presence, the power and the love of a risen Lord. **"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it."** John 1:5

"Love one another," Sydnor added. "We are a church together!"

*(Thank you, Sydnor, for trusting us with your story. We will be with you through this trial! Do you have a story to share? Call Shirley Koone at 287-3730 or email: shirleykoone@gmail.com)*

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### THE FOLLOWING MONETARY GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

In memory of Lydia Clontz and in honor of Norvin Clontz, by Elizabeth Preble, designated for the Music Fund.

In memory of Erma Benedict, by the Betty Wolfe Circle, designated for TLC.

In memory of Elaine Vinson, mother of Terri Wells, by Eric & Brenda Gibson, designated for Friendship Club; by Alan & Sherry Henderson, designated for the General Budget.

In memory of Doris Webre, mother of Vicki O'Neil, by the Chancel Choir, designated for the Music Fund.

### WELCOME TABLE

Volunteer help is needed. We serve the first three Mondays of every other month; March, May, July, September, November, and January. If there is a month with 5 Mondays, we usually serve the fourth Monday as well.

**You** could volunteer to cook, serve, or help clean up. The hours of cooking are 11:00 until 4:00, serving 4:00 until 6:30, and clean up from 6:00 until 7:30. Some individuals cook, serve, and clean up, so any extra help is appreciated. You can get with Bud Deck when you arrive and let him know where you are willing to serve.

If you are unable to volunteer, please join us for a delicious meal and make friends with our Welcome Table neighbors.

**March 6 ~ ~ March 13 ~ ~ March 20**



**Daylight Savings Time  
Begins on March 11, 2018**

## MISSION RECOGNITION PINS

United Methodist Women Special Mission Pin Recognition: The UMW is pleased to recognize five persons whose activities in 2017 go 'over and above' the normal giving of time and talents. Their sustained efforts in numerous mission activities in our church and community are deeply appreciated. Having received Special Mission Pins in the past, these three are recognized with a 'Gift to Mission' donation: Bob Bourne, Joan King, and Charlie Yelton. Bob Bourne continues to lead the mission project 'Inasmuch' that provides help to many local residents and brings us together in service. Joan heads up the Soul Food mission project team that comes together on Wednesdays in the church kitchen to organize, cook and deliver hundreds of meals to the homebound. Charlie spends countless hours making sure our church building is maintained and many hours with Habitat for Humanity.

Charles Wright receives a Special Mission Pin which includes a donation to UMW missions. He has spent many hours on church activities: Chairman of the Endowment Committee, usher, communion steward, a Trustee, Welcome Table dish-washer, Youth supper provider, and leading the Wednesday morning Men's Breakfast. A member of Habitat for Humanity, he has served as committee chair for the Habitat Restore and on the executive committee. He has volunteered at Rutherford Hospital for over ten years, and also serves on the Isothermal Foundation Board. His actions benefit so many in our community.

Rev. Sydnor Thompson III receives a Special Mission Pin for his extra efforts in numerous ways in 2017. Along with his regular church duties he added NETworX, the community initiative to battle generational poverty in Rutherford County through the power of relationship-building, goal-setting, mutual accountability, and support. With Pastor Thompson's leadership the church sponsored the Logan Preaching Mission with Bishop Thomas Bickerton of the New York Annual Conference here for three services and a Clergy Luncheon. In his mother's last days, Pastor Thompson continued to be here for us as a congregation and community. In these and many other ways, he is truly a pastor with a heart for missions and the UMW is pleased to recognize him.

## MARCH WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### Greeters (8:45)

First Sunday	Sandra Turner & Mabel Satrape
Second Sunday	Rory & Jeannie Kiser
Third Sunday	Russ & Linda Armentrout
Fourth Sunday	John & Dottie Kinlaw

### Greeters (11:00)

First Sunday	Jean Schuck & Betsy Woolridge
Second Sunday	Pete & Pam Pryor
Third Sunday	Dillard & Carolyn Morrow
Fourth Sunday	Grant & B. J. McRorie

### Sound System

First Sunday	Don Harris
Second Sunday	Steve & Alice Wright
Third Sunday	Ed Bosgra
Fourth Sunday	Eric Wells

Ushers (8:45) Rory Kiser, Earl Furbish,  
Russ & Linda Armentrout

Ushers (11:00) Alan Henderson, Rick Ensley,  
Odean Keever, Todd Snaitth, Steve Wright,  
Grant McRorie, Mike Fields

### Bread Makers

First Sunday	Soul Food Ministry
Second Sunday	Cheryl Waddingham
Third Sunday	Jane Shuford
Fourth Sunday	Brenda Gibson

### Acolytes

First Sunday	Meg Prevatt
Second Sunday	Dee Dee Majors
Third Sunday	Campbell Powell
Fourth Sunday	Johanna Deese

### **NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

March 16 at 12:00 noon

### **SUNDAY BULLETIN DEADLINE**

Every Monday at Noon

Send information for Newsletter & Bulletin  
to [pcraft@fumcrutherfordton.org](mailto:pcraft@fumcrutherfordton.org)

First United Methodist Church  
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Rutherfordton, NC 28139



We're on the Web!  
[www.fumcrutherfordton.weebly.com](http://www.fumcrutherfordton.weebly.com)



Find us on Facebook!

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