

First United Methodist Church
264 North Main Street
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
www.fumcrutherfordton.org
Vol. 6, No. 11

The First Word



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

AMPED

LIVE FULLY ALIVE!

JULY 1, 2018
11:00 am

11:00 AM SERVICE ONLY & NO 8:45 AM SERVICE
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



SUNDAY, JULY 1ST WORSHIP

9:45 – ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00 – VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FAMILY
EXPERIENCE IN THE FELLOWSHIP CENTER



THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME

— A Pastoral Word from Sydnor

Over the course of my 37-year ministry in The United Methodist Church, our denomination, along with other denominations, has struggled with our position on the inclusion of gays and lesbians in the church. From February 23-26, 2019 the General Conference of The United Methodist Church will meet in special session to consider a way forward that has been proposed by the Bishops of our church.

Our Bishops have asked for the church to be in prayer as we approach this important special session of General Conference. Last night, I was at a meeting with our District Superintendent, the Rev. Beth Crissman, where she spoke of her sincere belief in the power of prayer to carry our church forward. She proposed that we join her in praying daily, from 2:23 to 2:26 p.m. if possible, for the mission of our church, as we seek to discern our path forward on this contentious issue.

I also came across a helpful letter from Bishop John Schol of Greater New Jersey that I want to share with you. I encourage you to join me each day at 2:23 p.m. as we pray for God's Spirit to lead his church.

Yours in faith,



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In 2016, the General Conference asked the Bishops of the United Methodist Church to lead a process that would find a way forward for the church concerning human sexuality and, in particular, the inclusion of gays and lesbians in the church. The United Methodist Bishops just completed a week-long gathering in Chicago to review three plans developed by the Commission on the Way Forward.

Our time was filled with worship, prayer, conversation and discernment about the way forward for the church. We finalized our recommendation to the February 2019 Special General Conference Session.

The three proposals and their variations include:

1. The Traditionalist Plan: Strengthen the existing language about homosexuality in the Book of Discipline and create swift and strong punishment of anyone that does not follow the Book of Discipline.

The Council of Bishops is not recommending this model to the General Conference because it will create disruption, church trials and pain for individuals and congregations that would distract us from our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

2. The Connectional Conference Plan: Create a Connectional Conference Model for the church which allows congregations to decide to be a part of one of three "branches"/conferences in the United States – progressive, centrist or conservative. These conferences could modify the Book of Discipline and align church practices to their theology and understanding. Present annual conferences and even congregations could choose different "branches"/conferences.

The Council of Bishops is not recommending this model to the General Conference. A similar model was created in 1939 which separated a majority of African Americans and the rest of the church into distinct conferences. It was finally disbanded in 1968 and caused lasting pain to many in our denomination. It would not be helpful for us to be separate but equal, separating us by theology and segregating gays and lesbians. It would also require years to implement, maybe as many as 10 years and that would detract us from the mission of Jesus Christ and focus us on institutional matters.

3. The One Church Plan: Create a One Church Plan that allows:

Congregations to decide their marriage policies.

Pastors to determine who they will marry.

Boards of Ordained Ministry and clergy executive sessions to determine fitness and readiness for ministry.

The Council of Bishops is recommending this model to the General Conference because it preserves appropriate local decision-making and does not require congregations to think and act alike. It preserves our unity in the midst of differences, allows for contextualization and provides the least disruption to the mission of Jesus Christ.

This proposal represents the Bishops' best discernment around these critical and sensitive matters. This recommended plan along with a report that includes the details of each proposal will be sent to the February 2019 Special General Conference for their consideration. We also request that you intentionally and purposefully pray for our church as we enter into this season of deliberation and discernment.

The full report and recommended One Church Plan will be released no later than July 8, 2018. There is further rewriting that needs to occur and then all of the materials, approximately 75 pages, will be translated into the languages spoken at General Conference.

I recognize there will be United Methodists that will not be in agreement with the proposed plan by the Bishops. Some will find it hard to be in a church that allows discrimination against gays and lesbians. Others will not accept that parts of our denomination will allow congregations, pastors and conferences to make their own decisions about marriage and leadership for the church that may include gays and lesbians. I recognize the Bishops' recommendation will generate different feelings and opinions. I humbly ask you to stay open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in the church and in your life. I hope that while we may not all think alike, we will all love as Jesus loved.

Regardless of the outcome of the 2019 Special General Conference, I pledge to you to be your bishop, a bishop of the whole church. The Special General Conference could adopt or modify one of the plans listed above or make no change at all. I cannot not envision United Methodists in Greater New Jersey not gathering and serving together in one Annual Conference. We are united in common purpose and we continue to be graceful in our disagreements.

If there is change, I will not make appointments or lead in a way that seeks to change your mind about homosexuality. Each of us arrives at various beliefs based on our experiences, understandings and convictions. If General Conference does not make any changes to our Book of Discipline, I will continue to lead in our mission and respect our clergy and laity serving contextually in their ministry with their community.

When the full report from the Council of Bishops is released, I invite and encourage you to review and reflect on the recommendations.

I call us to stay focused on our mission, to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to grow vital congregations to transform the world. Let's not allow differences to deter us from serving Christ in and through our congregations. We have made great progress and God has a future with hope for us.

Thank you for being United Methodist, for your commitment to Jesus Christ and for your service to the church and the world. In the midst of the vast diversity found within our United Methodist Church, the Bishops continue to work for the unity of the church and long for each of us to BE OF ONE HEART in our desire to discern the mind and will of Jesus Christ for the mission of our church.

Keep the faith!

John Schol, Bishop

The United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey

YOUTH NEWS



Youth Summer Bible Study 6:00-7:30 pm

Weekly youth, in-home Bible Study will be hosted by various community leaders. The night includes dinner, fellowship, and fun! Be sure to subscribe to our text messages and social media to see where each week's study will be held.

Mark your calendars for Tuesdays!

July 10th—Billy & Terry Honeycutt
164 Forest Ridge Dr, Rutherfordton

July 17th—Mindy Walker
122 South St, Rutherfordton

July 24th—Kurt & Penny Parker
298 Forest Hills Circle, Rutherfordton

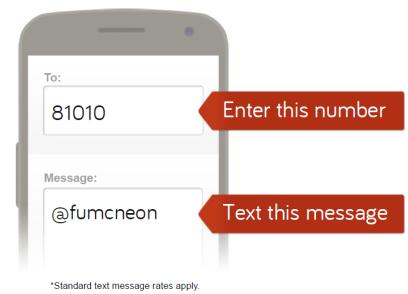
July 31st—TBA

YOUTH COUNCIL

WATCH FOR FUTURE MEETINGS IN THE FALL

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

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



CHILDREN'S NEWS

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!



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.



Watch fumcrutherfordton.org and First Kids on Facebook and Instagram for more information!

Everyone!

Children's Council

Watch for future meetings in the Fall

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/firstkidsrutherford/fumc-ministry-volunteer-submission>

OR email firstkidsrutherfordton@gmail.com



Mega Mondays are back this Summer!

Mondays from 9-12

Mad Science Party on July 9th

KidSenses (\$8) on July 16th

Register online!

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

July 29th at 9:45am
Fellowship Center

Mark your calendar for this churchwide event during the Sunday School hour that will allow those of us who see each other infrequently to fellowship together!



STORIES OF CHRIST'S LIGHT SHINING

This is not a Christ Light story, but a request for prayer that Christ's Light will shine in a special way on us at First Church.

There is a special group of people, chaired by Sherry Henderson, who are praying, studying, listening, and exploring what direction God would have our church pursue for the future. It's no secret that the average age of our congregation has gotten older and our worship attendance is not what it might be. At the same time our local mission projects and outreach in the community are as numerous and as caring as ever.

What should we do? What can we do? What would God have us do to be as inclusive in worship as we are in outreach?

I believe that the only way we can really answer these questions is to have a congregation that is actively praying and seeking answers. **Will you pray for our leadership & this committee? Will you pray for God's direction for His church in this place?**

Recently you received a questionnaire about the possibility of a contemporary service. This is an opportunity to express your opinions about this type of service and any other ideas that are on your mind. There is no commitment with this survey. It is the first of, perhaps, many in the thinking and exploring process of transformation.

You Only Have to Die...Leading Your Congregation to New Life is an excellent book by Dr. James Harnish. In it he tells the story of the process, the successes, and the mistakes that his church experienced in actively trying to revitalize with an older, downtown, declining congregation.

When asked for the most important element in the transformation process at Hyde Park, Harnish responded, "We're learning to pray." So that's what I'm asking you to do!

The Fellowship Sunday School class is using Dr. Harnish's book for chapter by chapter study. We have purchased several copies and would be pleased to loan them. You will find the reading fascinating and well worth your time. Just let me know if you want to borrow a copy.

Harnish cautions that transformation is not a "quick fix" as it goes to the very core of who we are. But the pain of change is worth it when you consider that Hyde Park Methodist has gone from declining, to now serving four congregations each Sunday with 2 traditional and 2 contemporary services!!!

(I still want to hear your stories. Call Shirley Koone at 287-3730 or email me at: shirleykoone@gmail.com)

WELCOME TABLE

July 9, 16, 23, & 30

Volunteer help is needed. **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.

THE FOLLOWING MONETARY GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

In honor of the Gospel Train on Inasmuch Day, designated for the Music Fund; by Bill & Peggy McBrayer.

In memory of Mr. W. D. "Bill" Walker, Jr. & Mrs. Elizabeth W. "Lib" Walker, designated for the Fellowship Roof Fund; by Tommy & Cheryl Walker.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

We are excited to announce that Stephen Ministry Training will take place again this fall! The 50 hour training involves 2 hour, weekly sessions, over a period of 4 months. These sessions focus on Christian caregiving, feelings, the art of listening, crisis theory, and Supervision for practicing Stephen Ministers.

Those serving as Stephen Ministers participate in bi-monthly meetings which include support groups and continuing education covering topics related to aging, grief, depression, hospitalization, long-term care, death and dying, divorce, childbirth and spiritual care, among others. Speakers from the community keep us updated and connected to local services.

This year the training will NOT have an overnight retreat. It will begin on Friday, September 7th, at 5:30 with dinner at the Olive Tree in Rutherfordton. Following dinner, we will begin the training in the Perry-Moore House until about 9:00. We will meet back at the church on Saturday morning, with breakfast at 7:30 and training until 12:30. Then the training will continue each Thursday night, from 6:30-8:30 and will be completed in December. The cost of the training is \$50 which pays for the required manuals and books.

We ask that you prayerfully consider if this training is for you. Look for our Stephen Ministers, who wear the blue name tags, and ask them about Stephen Ministry, the training, and their experiences. It is truly a blessing to gain this knowledge and to be able to be the hands and feet of Christ as we minister to those persons in our church and community. Giving our time to walk with someone on their life journey is a powerful way to shine the light of Christ on Main Street and beyond.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

July 18 at 12:00 noon

SUNDAY BULLETIN DEADLINE

Every Monday at Noon

Send information for Newsletter & Bulletin to pcraft@fumcrutherfordton.org

JULY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Greeters (8:45)

1st Sunday	Eric & Terri Wells
2nd Sunday	Sandra Turner & Mabel Satrape
3rd Sunday	Bobbie Tedford & Cheryl Waddingham
4th Sunday	Ken & Diane Sanford
5th Sunday	John & Dottie Kinlaw

Greeters (11:00)

1st Sunday	Joyce Gray & Margaret Britt
2nd Sunday	Connie Hicks & Ginny Moore
3rd Sunday	Shirley Koone & Wanda Davis
4th Sunday	Jean Schuck & Betsy Woolridge
5th Sunday	Pete & Pam Pryor

Sound System

1st Sunday	Mike Fields
2nd Sunday	Don Suttles
3rd Sunday	Steve & Alice Wright
4th Sunday	Ralph Hier
5th Sunday	Eric Wells

Ushers (8:45)

Rory Kiser, Earl Furbish,
Russ & Linda Armentrout

Ushers (11:00)

Alan Henderson, Mel Bunch,
Jimmy Dancy, Ralph Hier,
Greg Hodge, Jeff Powell,
David Rogers

Bread Makers

1st Sunday	Jane Shuford
2nd Sunday	Brenda Gibson
3rd Sunday	Bobbie Tedford
4th Sunday	Donna Carver
5th Sunday	Donna Watkins

Acolytes

1st Sunday	Campbell Powell
2nd Sunday	Johannah Deese
3rd Sunday	Maris Rogers
4th Sunday	Meg Prevatt
5th Sunday	Dee Dee Majors

Communion Stewards

2nd Sunday	VerAnn Kimbrough & Bobbie Tedford
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THE CHURCH OFFICE

will be closed on
Wednesday, July 4.



First United Methodist Church
264 North Main Street
Rutherfordton, NC 28139



We're on the Web!
www.fumcrutherfordton.weebly.com



Find us on Facebook!

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