

The First Word



2019 Church Council Planning Retreat

Saturday, January 12, 2019

9:00 am to Noon

Church Fellowship Center

All members of the 2019 Church Council are urged to attend as we plan our ministries for the coming year. Members of the church are asked to be in prayer for this important meeting where we will determine our ministry priorities for the coming year. Thank you!

We are currently setting up caller groups for each church committee with our church phone system, One Call Now. This will enable each committee chairperson to contact their committee members with important news, meeting reminders and any changes or updates. Instruction sheets will be available for each 2019 committee chairperson at the Church Council Planning Retreat.

NEW 2019 LEADERSHIP BOOKLETS

The new edition of our *Serving as Leaders* booklet is now available in the racks outside of the church office. Thank you all for agreeing to serve as leaders or as part of committees or ministry teams this coming year.

THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME — A Pastoral Word from Sydnor

Kelly and I never imagined we would be entering the new year with the challenge of a cancer metastasis and a 6-month course of chemotherapy ahead of us. The recurrence of my colon cancer first threw me into a bit of tail spin—but over time I've been adjusting to this new reality. At times I have even experienced a sense of peace and the assurance of God's presence as I've faced this "new normal."

I found myself remembering a conversation I had with an extraordinary young woman who was dealing with end stage cervical cancer some 38 years ago at the outset of my ministry. As she faced the reality of her cancer recurrence and her own mortality, she was anything but morbid or defeated. On the contrary, she approached her future with great hope and faith—but also with the awareness that her advanced cancer meant her future time on this earth was likely very limited. I remember she quoted Paul in 2 Corinthians 4, where he writes of how we carry the treasure of God's glory in earthen vessels and that "though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day." I still remember her vibrant witness to the power of God's grace at work in her life—and, as I experience the limits of my own fleshly life, I again find her faith to be both powerful and inspiring.

In sharing the news of my cancer's recurrence, my oncologist, didn't hold anything back. He answered my questions directly. The statistics for long term survival are not great for those with multiple metastases. But he encouraged me to have hope—the science of treating cancer is progressing every day and, who knows, some miracle immunotherapy drug may be discovered and change the whole equation for me.

Yet the reminder of my mortality gives me an even greater reason for hope. This earthen vessel may be fragile and easily broken—but its fragility serves only to accentuate the glory of God carried within it. Our mortality is not something that we need to try to shirk or deny. God uses our weakness as an occasion to reveal his resurrection strength.

So, Kelly and I are indeed approaching our future with faith and hope. We have entrusted our lives to God and are assured that he is with us always. Yes, I have cancer. But God shines his light through the cracks of my mortality and assures me, even as he assures us all, we have no reason to be afraid. "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

With faith and hope,



NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

We are still scheduling appointments for pictures for our Church Directory. You may schedule a time on Sunday or call Debbie Best at 704-472-5209 or call the Church office.

If you are unable to have a picture taken for the directory, you may submit a picture. We also would like to include group pictures such as VBS, Welcome Table, TLC, Soul Food, UMW, Keenagers, Youth, Operation Inasmuch, etc. Please email all picture submissions to debbiekbest@icloud.com in actual size by January 18, 2019.

Pictures will be taken in January as follows:

Wednesday, January 9th, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Saturday, January 12th, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Sunday, January 13th, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

THE FOLLOWING MONETARY GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

In honor of Bob Bourne, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In honor of Joe Carson, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Donna Carver, by Jane Waters, designated for the General Fund; by Joe & Ginny Wells, designated for the Fellowship Center Roof Fund.

In honor of the Chancel Choir, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of J. R. Davis, by Jane Waters, designated for the General Fund; by David & Peggy Truscott, designated for Soul Food.

In memory of Henry Edwards, by Bill & Ann Deviney, designated for the General Fund; by Gene & Jane Shuford, designated for Soul Food; by Ron & Dorothy Parker, Joe & Ginny Wells, Jeep & Johnnie Martin, designated for the Fellowship Center Roof Fund; by Shirley Koone, designated for the Audio Visual Fund; by Peggy Jones, designated for the Dillard Morrow Sunday School Class.

In memory of S. G. Gabriel, by Joseph & Katherine Hartley, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Eric Gibson, by Joseph & Katherine Hartley, designated for the General Fund.

In honor of the Handbell Choir, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In honor of Don Harris, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Bill McBrayer, by Jeep & Johnnie Martin, Joe & Ginny Wells, Ron & Dorothy Parker, designated for the Fellowship Center Roof Fund; by Joyce Gray, David & Peggy Truscott, designated for Soul Food; by Truman & Linda Harris, Bill & Ann Deviney, designated for the General Fund; by Lu Hamlin, Shirley Koone, designated for the Audio Visual Fund.

In honor of Pete Pryor, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of George J. Schuck, Jr., by Jean Schuck, designated for the Fellowship Center Roof Fund.

In honor of Sydnor & Kelly Thompson, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In honor of Tommy Walker, by Harry & Trish Harrelson, designated for the General Fund.

In memory of Charles & Lib Young (for Christmas), by Bill & Maggie Young, Molly & Miette Fox, and Jae Berry and Seon Joon Young, designated for the Dillard Morrow Sunday School Class.



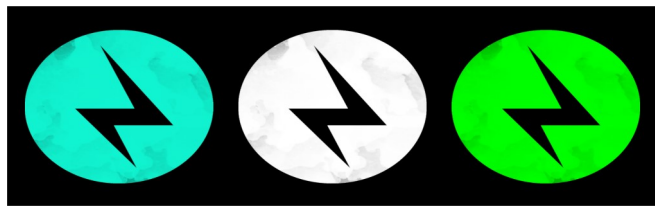
YOUTH NEWSLETTER

We have had a very exciting month throughout December in Neon! Throughout the month of December our series was titled, "The Problem With Christmas." In this series we discussed how sometimes it can feel like Christmas has lost its meaning. This can be due to the fact that sometimes we allow the Christmas story to become common. We discovered that if we view the Christmas story in its proper context, it is not the beginning of the story, but the plot twist. Sometimes going back to learn some of the history of the Jewish people can help show us the importance of the birth of Christ.

As we enter the new year we are extremely excited about everything that is to come for the youth this year. We are currently in the process of planning missions opportunities for the summer as well as Confirmation for some of our youth. If you would be interested in being a mentor for Confirmation please contact me at your earliest convenience. Also, if anyone would be interested in helping out with future missions opportunities I would love to hear from you. We are so excited about the impact that Neon will have on this community and surrounding communities, and we would love for you to be a part of it!

Blessings,

Gary Williams



We need volunteers to help with Neon on Sunday nights as well as volunteers to help with upcoming youth trips. If you are interested please contact me at gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org.



We have had an amazing Advent season in First Kids. Throughout the month of December, we learned about the importance of helping others in need. What better time than the Christmas season to think of others rather than ourselves? When it seems that everywhere in society we are being pushed to try to get more for ourselves, we taught the children the importance of giving back to others who may have less than them. The Children really grasped this message as they have done many activities where they shared with others, and helped out others instead of themselves.

We have many activities planned for the children as we enter the new year that we are extremely excited about. We are already planning for VBS this year and are very excited about our theme for this year. We hope that this will be a huge outreach opportunity this year and would appreciate your help in spreading the word to the rest of the community. We are expecting a lot of growth in our children's ministry this year, but we cannot do it without you. Thank you in advance for your support this year!

Blessings,

Gary Williams



VOLUNTEERS

We need volunteers for First Kids! If you are interested in volunteering to help out with Sunday School or Children's church, please send me an email at gwilliams@fumcrutherfordton.org.

WELCOME TABLE

January 7, 14, & 21, 2019

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.

WINTER CLOTHING COLLECTION: We are collecting coats for our Welcome Table guests. Please place coat donations in the tote in the church office. Thanks for all that you do for our neighbors.

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

The church office will be closed on Monday, January 21st. The cut-off for the January 27th bulletin will be Noon on Friday, January 18th.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

January 17 at 12:00 noon

SUNDAY BULLETIN DEADLINE

Every Monday at Noon

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

JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Greeters (8:45)

1st Sunday Rory & Jeannie Kiser
2nd Sunday Sandra Turner & Mabel Satrape
3rd Sunday Bobbie Tedford & Cheryl Waddingham
4th Sunday Russ & Linda Armentrout

Greeters (11:00)

1st Sunday Shirley Koone & Wanda Davis
2nd Sunday Buzz & Joyce Mercer
3rd Sunday Odean & Barbara Keever
4th Sunday Jane Waters & Zana Whitmire

Sound System

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

Ushers (8:45)

Ken Sanford, Jim Cuthbertson, Doug Melton, Hugh McMahon

Ushers (11:00)

David Best, Odean Keever, Todd Snaith, Steve Wright, Grant McRorie, Rick Ensley, Mike Fields

Bread Makers

1st Sunday Becky Wright
2nd Sunday Soul Food Ministry
3rd Sunday Cheryl Waddingham
4th Sunday Jane Shuford

Acolytes

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

Communion Stewards

1st Sunday Ron & Dorothy Parker

First United Methodist Church
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We're on the Web!
www.fumcrutherfordton.weebly.com



Find us on Facebook!

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