



ECCLESIA

May 2020

FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 1783

IN THIS ISSUE



On the cover: Flowering Cross of a Different Color

This year, as you know, we were not able to be together on Easter Day. Pastors Mark and Stacey created wonderful digital content that allowed the congregation to participate in Holy Week services from Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Day. If you missed any of these Worshipful Moments, they can still be found on the church's YouTube channel - link provided on the home page of the church website.

Among the traditions that needed to adapt this year was the flowering cross. Several alternatives were taken into consideration, including placing the cross on the lawn for church members to come and add their flowers. Ultimately it was decided that inviting church members to send in pictures from their gardens would allow more people to participate, and it would encourage church members to stay home as much as possible. The result was a beautiful image of the cross created from over 100 photos sent to the church!

Page 9: Being a Disciple

Our church is more than our building - while we cannot meet together, we are eager to continue being the church. Stay home, pray, sew a mask, send a note, relieve hunger - 5 ways that you can be the hands and feet of Christ right now.

Page 11: Directory Updates

In this month's Ecclesia we are happy to include several directory updates. A silver lining in our current situation is it has given us more opportunities to make corrections and updates to our church records. If you have a new address, phone number, or email address we would love to hear from you!

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Reverend Doctor Mark Conforti, *Senior Pastor*
The Reverend Stacey Lundy, *Associate Pastor*
Mrs. Becca Blackmon, *Business Administrator*
Mrs. Christine Maloney, *Administrative Assistant*
Ms. Jen Fogt, *Director of Youth Ministries*
Mr. Mike Fansler, *Building Superintendent*
Mrs. Bailee Weisensel, *Director of Children's Ministries*

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Rev. Garry Cook M.Div. LCSW,
Pastoral Counseling, Sanctuary Counseling Group
Mrs. Donna Fredrick,
Lead Teacher of After-School Child Care Program
Mrs. Patsy Langlais,
Director of Preschool
Ms. Beth Yelvington,
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REMARKS

Pressing the “PLAY” button should be simple, but when things are stuck on “PAUSE,” pressing “PLAY” can be frustrating. That’s how it was with the old VCR, and that’s how life has been for us these days.

I remember our family’s first VCR, or “video cassette recorder.” My parents bought one after a visit to my Granddaddy’s house. Yes, he had one! And during that trip to Granddaddy’s, we made a special trip to the Albertson’s grocery store to rent movies. We watched “Jaws,” and the shark scenes frightened me. What fun! Soon the new glorious family VCR held a prominent place in the family room: directly below the hallowed television set. Getting cable channels followed, too. With the VCR’s ability to record directly from the television, we quickly developed quite the home entertainment operation.

The VCR usually worked well, but not always. The time “12:00” kept flashing. And programming the VCR to record a show was not simple; my sister tried taping “General Hospital” but would get reruns of “Donahue” instead. With wear and tear, like most electronics, the VCR wore out. Sometimes, while playing a movie, the VCR would freeze. No matter what button you pressed – “REWIND” or “FAST-FORWARD” – the image on the screen stayed stuck. Even when while pressing “PLAY,” the VCR was still stuck on “PAUSE.”

Over the past several weeks, we keep pressing “PLAY” because we are eager to get going with life. We want to move freely in and out of stores & restaurants. We want to visit family. And of course, we want to get back to church. Let’s press “PLAY” and move on already, right? But we’re still stuck on “PAUSE.” Pressing “FAST-FORWARD” simply won’t work either. Trying to press “REWIND” won’t help, because we cannot undo what’s been done. Like the VCR, we’re stuck on “PAUSE.” While we’re stuck, we are blessed with many opportunities: to reflect on our past, to look around where we are now, and to dream about our future.

Rev. Fred Jordan’s history article this month touches upon a valuable era for our church. Be sure to read it! Without giving away any spoilers, his article especially stirred something inside of me. Let me affirm what I’ve been sensing for a long time: our church needs to recover a lost part of the church’s spirit. What lost part? The answer: everybody joined together, participating actively, & engaged together for a common mission. When the common mission involves constructing a building, the effort’s impact is viewable. Seeing the progress keeps people motivated. Over 100 years ago, that meant building the Tabernacle in one day, persevering through the Spanish flu of 1918, and finishing the construction of the congregation’s third sanctuary.

Today, we are still all about construction! We are not constructing a building, however; we’re constructing Christian community. It’s built with integrity and love. The construction materials are authenticity, caring hands, and servant hearts. When we see it being built, we are enthusiastic for the church’s mission!

For now, we are stuck on “PAUSE.” Soon there will be a time to press “PLAY” and watch the movie play out. The Good News is that God does not abandon us to be stuck. You have an important role! Through the grace of Jesus Christ, we are saved so that we can be part of the story.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Mark



STAYING AT HOME: STORIES FROM QUARANTINE

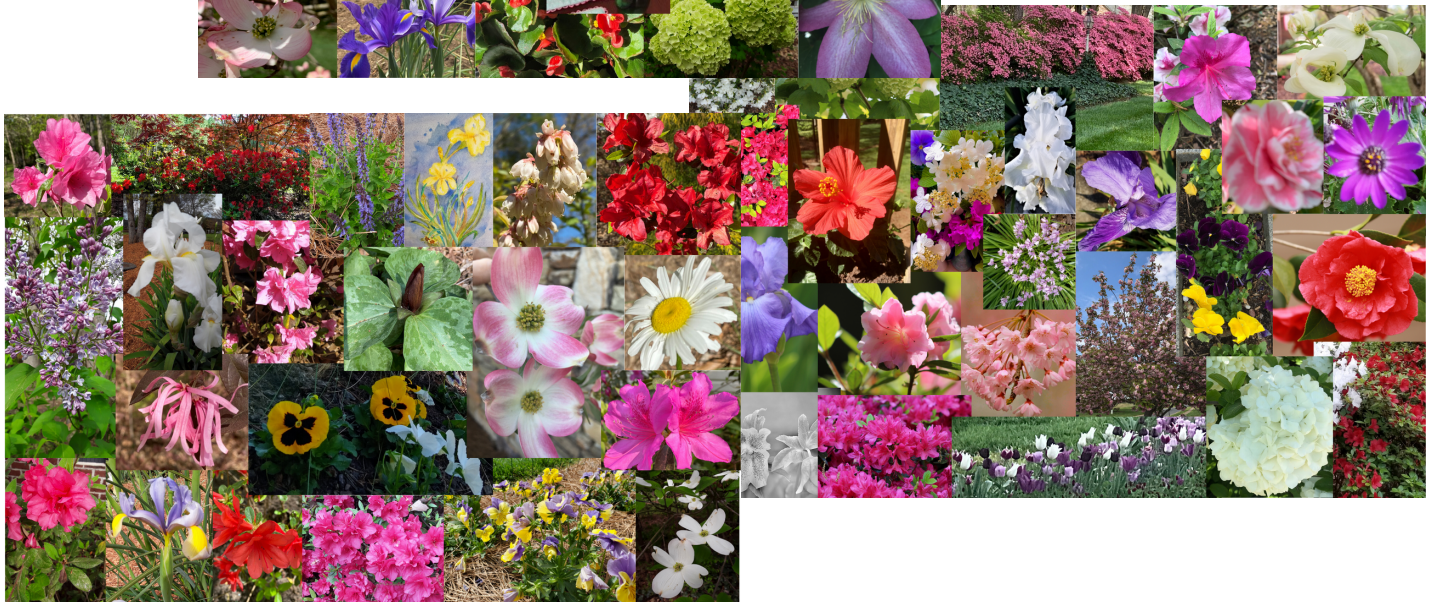
We are living through a moment in history in 2020. Like other historical moments many of us have experienced, this time has the potential to change us. How has your time of social distance impacted you? Church archivist, Celeste Ward, would like to record stories of the church during COVID-19 isolation. We have already received the stories below. Celeste invites you to send your story to the church office too!

SALLY MORRIS

Keeping busy during this time of isolation has been an experience to one who loves to be on the go. So, I have used up all the extra fabric I have here making face masks. If there are folks out there who want face masks and have extra cotton fabric laying around, I would be happy to turn it into useful face masks for them or anyone else they want to give them to. I also have been busy with crocheting prayer shawls for our church ministry. Then when I get a little stir crazy, I go outside and work in the garden. All in all this has been an enlightening experience and time to connect with our Lord. May God bless you all and keep you safe and healthy.

SHERRY DILLARD

My friends and I are enjoying playing bridge online with each other, with both audio and video. Unfortunately, no photos. The card site is trickstercards.com and you can play other card games as well, and its FREE. Check it out... After the games are over, we can sit and chat and that's fun too.



STAYING AT HOME: STORIES FROM QUARANTINE



LARRY & DENA OLDHAM

We are an older couple who have retired to Salisbury in the past two years. We had both been substitute teaching in the Rowan County School system. I have also been volunteering at the church as needed. When the Coronavirus hit Rowan County our teaching and volunteering came to a halt. We have children in Charlotte who are in the medical field and the first phone calls that we received were instructions to stay at home. If we needed anything our children said they would ship it to us (by Drone from Amazon I suppose) or they would bring us what we needed and leave it on our front porch. Except for the occasional sneaking up to Food Lion (wearing gloves and the masks that Dena made for us) we have been behaving. Dena has been working in the yard and cleaning up the house for the hundredth time. (I never knew it was that dirty.) I asked Stacey Lundy to send me a list of shut ins at the nursing homes and we are sending them "thinking of you cards." I know they must be lonely. My 98 year-old Aunt also told me that she can't even visit with her own friends in the nursing home and they bring her food to her each day.

I have finally taken on a project, now that I have time, of writing my memoirs. I want to leave a history of my life for my children so that after I die they can say, "Oh, that's why he was like that". We do watch Pastor Mark and Pastor Stacey on Sunday morning and then tune in to the Seekers Zoom Class at 10:30 on Sunday Morning. We are praying for our nation, our church, our friends and family and we trust that everyone is doing the same. We are not bored, Dena was doing projects all her life and this is just another day, however, this time is rare because we are without friends or the ability to go out and eat. Dena has resurrected some of her old family recipes and we are eating well. Both of us have lost about five pounds and after fifty years of being together, I finally get to see the real color of Dena's hair. Pray for us and the world as we all face these days together. Our feeling is that God may have had a hand in this and is telling the world to slow down and appreciate all that he has given us. We think his plan is working. We look forward to seeing you all in person in church and Sunday School class.

With Love in Christ,
Larry and Dena Oldham

BRINGING THE EGG HUNT TO THEM

The Easter Egg Hunt was among the traditions we faced changing or cancelling for this year. Bailee and Jen decided to find a way to make it happen and created 'driveway visits.' We contacted as many families as we could visit in a week, asking if we could stop by for a few minutes see them from a safe distance.

We packed 78 paper bags with goodies like:

- 6 eggs (with candy)
- Playdoh
- Bubbles
- Stickers/pencils/fidget toys
- A family devotion to complete together for Easter

Precautions were taken to spray packaging with a CDC certified spray, and gloves worn while assembling and delivering the bags. Parents, youth, and children alike were happy to see us. We loved the opportunity to see people in person and check in on our families. Bailee and Jenni are making plans to do another round of 'driveway visits' soon.

The Salisbury Post documented the egg hunt on April 9!



EVEN MORE EGG HUNT PHOTOS



CHURCH HISTORY

"Looking back, moving forward"

Some prophets of doom have already proclaimed 2020 to be the last days of the Biblical apocalypse. Before you jump to the wrong conclusion, revisit the world of 1918 and the multiple challenges that faced our church.

First, the congregation had no permanent building. They had demolished their former sanctuary to make way for a new Methodist Church being built on what is now the grassy yard next to the education building. Their temporary sanctuary was a rustic wooden Tabernacle erected in a single day on a lot loaned by the First Presbyterian Church. Not only did the congregation lack a proper building, they had to raise the money to pay for this future house of worship. Construction of the new Methodist Church had begun in November of 1916. The congregation did not occupy the new church until March of 1919.



The church under construction in 1917

Second, the church launched this bold building campaign during wartime. The First World War began in Europe in 1914. The United States did not commit troops until 1917. Thirty-five hundred Rowan County young men registered for the draft and headed for France. Many were Methodists including my maternal grandfather. By the November 1918 armistice, 116,708 United States military men and women had lost their lives.

Third, 1918 also brought a very different enemy. A flu epidemic struck in the spring, eased off during the summer, and returned even stronger in the fall. Sometimes misnamed the Spanish flu, it affected 500 million people, one-third of the world's population, and claimed at least 50 million lives world-wide and 675,000 U.S. lives.

This particular H1N1 virus packed a mortal punch. Physicians lacked either antibiotics to treat the bacterial infection or a vaccine to protect the public. Public health workers only had the same simple suppression tools we still employ today –isolation, handwashing, disinfectants, and limited public gatherings. Salisbury's desperately ill overflowed the county's medical facilities and slept on pallets in what is now the second floor of the Rowan Museum on North Main Street.

While the First World War had a minimum impact on Methodist church life, the same could not be said of the influenza pandemic. Then as now, the doors of all churches closed. The Methodist Church remained closed for six straight weeks. Church leaders had to find creative new ways to continue pastoral ministry. At that time four quarterly conferences governed all Methodist congregations. The presiding elder, now called a district superintendent, chaired those meetings. Because of the quarantine and in the absence of a church building, the Rev. J.C. Rowe led our November 1918 quarterly conference at the private home of P.N. Peacock on West Horah Street. Sadly the church's pastor, W. A. Lambeth, was too sick to attend. The flu infected clergy and laity alike.

As today's churches temporarily close due to the coronavirus, we need to remember that our congregation weathered this storm once before. As in 1918, we lack both a vaccine to protect our members and an effective treatment for those who become ill. Thankfully most patients get better on their own, but far too many will die. There is little that we can do to alleviate this pandemic except remain in our homes when advised to do so, practice good personal hygiene, pray, do what we can to help each other from a safe distance, and believe that by God's grace this too will pass.

Fred Jordan, Church Historian

BEING A DISCIPLE



While we can't be together in person, there are several things you can do to support the community and share the love of Christ with others. Here are the five things we encourage you to focus on:

1. **Stay home** - one of the most loving things you can do for others right now is stay at home and slow the spread of germs.
2. **Pray** - we pray for the needs of the world, our nation, Rowan county, and for the needs of the church.
3. **Write a note** - we need to connect with one another!
4. **Sew a mask** - if you have the skills, you can share your gift!
5. **Relieve hunger** - we are sending small teams of volunteers to pack food at Rowan Helping Ministries. The church has also made financial contributions to RHM and Meals on Wheels, as well as partnered with Enon Baptist Church to ensure Isenberg students had access to meals over spring break.



A NOTE FROM THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The staff has worked very hard to carry out the requirements from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to combat the spread of the Coronavirus. After governor Cooper issued the Executive Order on March 27, 2020, which ordered people in the state of North Carolina to stay at home for at least thirty days, the decision was made to close the Child Development Center to safeguard our children and staff during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Staff members have called parents, sent letters, and plans to stay in touch with children and parents. In the meantime, the kitchen and classrooms were cleaned with focused attention on all surfaces - sanitizing toys, equipment, and furniture.

Our plan is to open the Child Development Center once things improve. The Child Development Center Staff wishes everyone to stay well during these difficult days.

CHURCH MUSIC



Music is an integral part of worship, and a beloved way for many of us to spend time with God. We have created an Eastertide playlist for you to listen to during this season!

To listen:

1. Go to spotify.com to download the application
2. Create a Spotify account
3. Search: FUMC Salisbury
4. Click on Eastertide and press play!
(link also found on the church website)

MAY BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 Trish Brinkley
Parker Williams

2 Meredith Briley
Grace Fazia
Pete Smith

3 Susan Fowler
Jean Hill

4 Katie Scarvey

5 Gary Applewhite
Kathy Duke
Cindy Martin
Quinn Scarvey

6

7 Cole Goodnight

8 Katie Egloff
Laurie Zerger

9 Sondra Shuler
Millie Stout
Ian Walworth

10

11 Kathy Connor
Kurt Kolkebeck
George Shuler
Betty Slife
Maris Wainright

12 Chandler Johnson
Lori Moore

13 Eugene Cox
David Walters

14 Carrie Carter
Sally Helms

15 Steve Haines
Joyce Ingram
Dakeita Kluttz
Meredith Williams

16 Jean Corpening
Jerry Dymond
Anne Edwards

17 Allison Lineberry

18 Mark Stanback

19 Ron Cherry
John Conrad
Gregg Williams
Nancy Wyrick

20

21 Lauren Watts

22 Dinah Carpenter
Alexander Whitaker

23 Anne Ellis

24 Dakota Insley
Evan O'Neal

25 Chuck Bowman

26 Stefani McCoy

27 Janet McCoy
Susan McLain

28 Larry Schall

29 Amanda Caudle

30 Billy Webb
Mason Whitaker

31 Harry Warren



FUMC FAMILY AND EXTENDED FAMILY TRANSITIONS

In Remembrance

Please keep the family in your prayers

PAMELA ALLEN CORDTS

Wife of Larry Cordts

October 28, 1948 - March 26, 2020

DONALD PIERCE CHAMPION

Husband of Ginny Champion

April 19, 1940 - March 31, 2020

BOBBY RAY GILLAND

Brother of Jim Gilland

August 19, 1937 - April 6, 2020

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." - Psalm 46:1

A NOTE OF THANKS

From Ginny Champion:

Thank you for your prayers and cards as I recover from surgery. I appreciate the prayers, cards, and support received from our friends at First UMC in the loss of Don. This is one of the most caring congregations anyone could know.



DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please note the following changes in your directory:

Richard Paschall

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John Conrad

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Jim Ogle

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Jean Hill

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Amy Foote

amykfoote@gmail.com

Kelly Fisher

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Sherry Dillard

120 Millwright Court
Mocksville, NC 27028

ECCLESIA

NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

