

ECCLLESIA

February 2020



fumcsalisbury.org

FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
SALISBURY, NC
EST. 1789

IN THIS ISSUE



On the cover: Year of Prayer

Prayer is always central to a thriving faith, and this year we are putting an added emphasis on the practice. As a church we will have some unique and intentional opportunities to engage with the spiritual practice of prayer in a variety of ways. Be encouraged and keep your eyes open for all the ways you can experience and participate in the Year of Prayer.

Visioning Days: Page 4

Don't miss this opportunity for the whole church to gather and discern our path forward together. 2020 is the year of prayer, and we invite you to prayerfully consider attending both sessions!

Ministry Spotlight on Meals on Wheels: Page 7

One of the wonderful ways our church is active in sharing the love of Christ in the community is by volunteering with Meals on Wheels. We love that this ministry allows seniors who remain living at home to do so with support.

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*

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Mr. Mike Fansler, *Building Superintendent*

Mrs. Bailee Weisensel, *Director of Children's Ministries*

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REMARKS

Do you always have the right words at the right time? Sometimes those words come straight to us, as easily as air enters our lungs, and other times we are speechless. When might this happen? An inspiring moment of beauty may render us mute: a brilliant performance or a genuine act of kindness. Other times it's the gravity of a dire situation, or the heartbreak that comes with loss – these are the devastating moments that not only take our breathe away, but also our words.

Do you always have the right words to pray? Likely not. None of us do, because we are constantly interacting with our environment, other people, and our own thoughts. It takes diligent discernment to gain awareness of what God is doing, how God wants us to live faithfully. Always coming up with the right words to pray is to claim spiritual mastery over one's life. How preposterous! And how faithless.

A genuine act of faith can be humbly admitting, "I don't know what to pray, so I will read carefully the words another Christian has prayed. As I read, I will allow their words to become my prayer."

Think of how many famous singers do not write their own songs, yet they are able to make the songs their own. I recently watched a documentary of Linda Ronstadt, and was reminded that she did not write any of her songs. Ronstadt sang rock 'n' roll, country, operetta, and even Mexican folk songs, all written by other people.

Elvis Presley did not write "Hound Dog," but you sure can imagine him singing it! Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, two unknown people, composed that song. But when Elvis sang "Hound Dog," the song became undeniably his. The same is true with "New York, New York." That song was written by John Kander and Fred Ebb, two more people whose names are meaningless to you. But you know that "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere," thanks to Liza Minnelli, Frank Sinatra, and Tony Bennet singing the song Kander and Ebb composed.

What about the prayers that faithful people have composed? If singers can belt out tunes written by song-writers, then we can offer prayers written by the saints. In the same way that a singer studies the song, inhabits the words and melody, and brings the song to life, we can take seriously the prayers others have written. We can study their words. We can enter into the phrases and themes. And by the Holy Spirit working in us, the prayers can bring us to life.

For example, Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) penned at least one prayer that's worth our attention. The more we learn about Francis' life – how he was born into privilege but shunned it all for the sake of serving the poor – the more his prayer gains coherence for us today. Consider just the first two lines:

*Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;*

Try praying these two lines right now. Don't just read them. Look closely. Ponder slowly. Notice the phrasing of this English translation. Imagine climbing into this prayer, that you actually become God's instrument of peace, so that you are equipped to "sow love." Take these two lines and pray them at least three more times today and every day this week. Make this prayer your own. Throughout the year 2020, "The Year of Prayer," we will continue praying the prayers of the saints, so that these prayers can bring us to life.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Mark



2020 YEAR OF PRAYER



These two days will be set aside for prayer, conversation, and discernment about the vision for First United Methodist Church of Salisbury. What is God's preferred future for us? How is our heritage a platform for our future? How can we best live into our identity? All church members are invited -- plan to attend BOTH sessions in the Fellowship Hall!



Sunday February 23, 1:30-5:30pm

This session will focus on the church's mission & the calling of the laity.

Gloria Hughes is a United Methodist minister in the Western North Carolina Conference. She has served in local churches, campus ministry, denominational offices, at Lake Junaluska conference ministries, and she is a leader for the Confirmation spiritual growth weekends that our youth attend.



Sunday March 22, 1:30-5:30pm

This session will focus on a systems approach to the church's mission and vision.

John Dyer is leading workshops for churches across Western North Carolina, taking his expertise from the world of industrial engineering and applying its lessons to churches like ours. He is the Lay Leader at Williamson's Chapel UMC in Mooresville, and the author of *The Façade of Excellence: Defining a New Normal of Leadership*.

CHURCH HISTORY

"Looking back, moving forward."

In May of 2020, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church will again tackle the divisive topic of human sexuality. This debate has gone on for over a century and shows no sign of ending. The specific topics have shifted, but the fundamental disagreement has remained the same.



From 1880 to 1900, the first American sexual revolution saw scientists replace clergy as the persons with all the reproductive answers. The initial issue was birth control euphemistically called "feminine hygiene." For the first time women had a reliable way to prevent pregnancy and plan the size of their family. The issue was particularly critical for people living in poverty and unable to support the expanding needs of large families. The distribution of contraceptives remained largely illegal until 1918. Christian Churches routinely banned their use. In 1960, The Federal Drug Administration approved an oral contraceptive pill that took the debate to a new level. Throughout this conversation Methodists maintained their opposition to pre-marital sex but gradually accepted family planning as a legitimate ethical choice for married couples.

In the late 1950s and 1960s the debate shifted to the family and the growing reality of divorce. Each year the Methodist Church's Committee on Family Life selected a "Family of the Year." It was always a traditional family with an employed father, a stay at home mother, and several happy children. The nuclear family replaced the class meeting as the basic unit of Methodism. Divorce threatened this idealistic picture and received strong condemnation. Divorced persons were denied ordination, and in some places clergy wives were forbidden to work outside the home. This restrictive view of family left out those who never married as well as widows and widowers. These views also experienced radical change over the last century.

Next came the fight over sex education in public schools. Many feared that sexual knowledge led to youthful promiscuity. The Methodist Church found a middle ground and developed its own program of value based sex education.

A fierce debate over abortion highlighted numerous late 20th century church conferences. While still debated today, Methodists gradually moved away from a position of strict opposition to a limited acceptance of abortion as a legal option under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers. At the same time Methodists stood firm in their opposition to abortions used for birth control or gender selection.

The current debate over homosexuality is but another battle in the sexual ethics wars. Traditionalists take a legalistic view of the Biblical admonitions against homosexual acts. Progressives emphasize Biblical teachings of grace for everyone regardless of their sexual orientation. Feelings run hot on both sides of this debate.

It is time for cooler heads to prevail both globally and locally. For the last 150 years, Methodists have disagreed about human sexuality; but we have always found a compromise that respects diverse opinions and preserves church unity. John Wesley said in a sermon on the Catholic Spirit, "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike?" Loving and respecting each other as members of the body of Christ needs to have a high priority in our prayer life as we approach yet another General Conference.

Fred Jordan, Church Historian

METHODIST CONNECTION



Covered Dish Luncheon with Methodist Connection
February is that special LOVE month. Come join Methodist Connection, February 11 at noon. Bring your delicious covered dish. Our program is the acclaimed Dancing Queens and Kings, a local seniors line dancing group from Salisbury. This group boasts of 25 members so please add a 2nd helping to your dish for we wish them to eat with us. It will be a fun time for all.

MISSIONS

SUPPORTING SUMMER MISSIONS

PARENTS NIGHT OUT FUNDRAISER

Let us watch your children while you enjoy a night out!
February 14, 6:00-9:00pm
\$15 for one child, \$25 for two!
Open to children who have been potty trained through 5th graders.
[RSVP on the church website](#)



FEBRUARY 7 | 7-9PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Fun for all ages
Cheerwine Floats, Snacks, & Dancing
Donations accepted
for **Camp Discovery**



MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: MEALS ON WHEELS



Meals on Wheels

One way that our church helps facilitate residents remaining in their homes in our community is by delivering Meals on Wheels (MOW) twice every month on Tuesdays (and two fifth Tuesdays each year). The delivery to home-bound persons brings them a nutritious lunch and a quick visit from a volunteer driver. This daily check in assures that the recipients are safe, denotes any needs and delivers food. Other ways daily deliveries help recipients is by bringing OTC meds (NC Med Assist), pet food, newspapers, sharing information re: elections and voting and treating with gift favors from the community. Our youth have created some of those small gifts that have been delivered to brighten the recipients day!

We are blessed here at FUMC to have a wonderful team of volunteers who provide these services on a regular schedule. After picking up meal totes and route sheets at the MOW's office on S. Salisbury Ave in Spencer, our drivers are out on one of 9 routes to deliver. Total time involved is usually 1 ½ to 2 hours and uses 1 gallon of gas. Many, many thank yous to these folks who dedicate themselves to this mission project which is so valuable to the over 225 recipients in Rowan County.

Other ways our church supports MOW is through monetary gifts, donations of items for birthday bags, items for office use and support of fund raising opportunities. Every meal recipient receives some financial assistance to help pay the cost of their meal. There is always a need for more volunteers to deliver meals. To seek more information, provide donations or offer your services, please contact the FUMC coordinators, Julie Gainer 704-213-9100 or Beverly Gobble 704-636-7336. We would welcome you to our team and help you to receive satisfaction from providing a much needed assistance to home bound neighbors. You will be glad you said yes!

LENTEN PRAYER & STUDY OPPORTUNITIES



Ash Wednesday

The Ash Wednesday service will be on February 26 at 6:15 in the sanctuary.

Lenten Prayer Services

Each subsequent week in Lent we will continue in a spirit of prayer in the Chapel for Lenten Prayer Services at 6:15 in the Chapel.

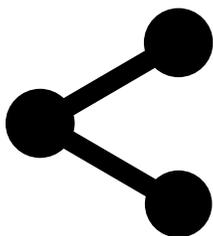
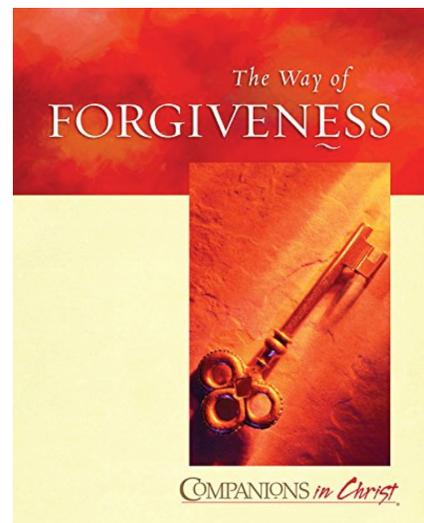
Stations of the Cross

On April 1, Salisbury Youth will lead us in the Stations of the Cross: a journey through the last week of Jesus' life and his passion on the cross. It is always meaningful!

Book Study: The Way of Forgiveness

The Way of Forgiveness (A Companions in Christ Study)
Join us for a 6-week study after the Midweek@First meal on the topic of forgiveness. It will be led by Sue Park, one of our lay servants who has taught in several capacities.

The study will begin on Wednesday, February 19 at 6:30 in the Christian Forum room. Participants will attend the Ash Wednesday service on February 26, and continue the following weeks. Books are \$10. Please register at fumcsalisbury.org or by contacting Pastor Stacey at stacey@fumcsalisbury.org | 704-636-3121.



Rowan Missional Network of Methodist Churches: Lenten Prayer Stations

Our connection of churches will be hosting prayer stations at Christ UMC on March 29. Look for more details to come.

CHILDRENS MINISTRY

Childrens Church



Have you heard?

Children's Church kicked off in January! Each week on Sunday mornings, children ages 5-3rd grade will have the opportunity to participate in Children's Church. The purpose of Children's Church is to assist in teaching our children how to worship.

Our goal is to help our children transition from being in the nursery to participating in worship. Children will become familiar with hymns, praise songs, creeds, scripture verses and prayers. Children's church also provides an age-appropriate sermon. Children will depart for Children's Church after the Moments with Children and will enter back into worship during the Doxology.



Children's Ministry needs Sunday School teachers and volunteers to help lead Children's Church. Get in touch with Bailee to discuss opportunities! She can be reached at Bailee@fumcsalisbury.org or 704-754-0436.



YOUTH MINISTRY

Roy and Lula Goodman Scholarship

It's time for our high school seniors to be making decisions about college, and one of the biggest things on their to do list: scholarships!

We are proud to be able to provide a scholarship for graduating seniors as they pursue their dreams by working toward undergraduate degrees. Seniors have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship if they have at least a 2.0 average GPA and plan on attending college in the fall of 2020. Applications can be found on the church website under the 'Give' tab. The scholarship committee's deadlines are firm, so make sure your application is returned on time!

We will be awarding the scholarship to seniors on May 24. On this day our high school seniors will be helping to lead worship, and all graduates will receive a prayer shawl and Bible from the church.

Application Deadline: April 10

Interview Date: May 2



YOUTH MINISTRY CONTINUED



February

- 3, Superbowl - No Gathering
- 9, Gathering
- 16, Gathering
- 23, Gathering

GATHERINGS ARE FROM 5:30-7:30PM
ENTER THROUGH THE FELLOWSHIP HALL DOOR



Winter Retreat Recap

Winter Retreat 2020 was incredible! We had a wonderful time at the beach as we played mini golf, swam in the pool, and spent our devotion time really pressing into deep questions of faith. Our students are remarkable and really challenge one another to think deeply. We can't wait to go back! In our devotions we talked about how spending time with God is similar to spending time with friends, and how the two are different. Hearing from God is not quite like calling a friend on the phone, but both kinds of relationships take time and effort to build.



Confirmation classes have begun, we invite you to pray for our confirmands!
Confirmation Sunday is April 26



CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER



Happy New Year from all of us at the First United Methodist Church Child Development Center! We are excited to start the new year out with learning all about winter and the season of winter! We are continuing to learn through the Creative Curriculum as we are completing assessments on all students! We will be adding themed curriculum to all of our learning centers and learning stations that will follow our Creative Curriculum, as we keep moving forward to meet all academic goals and learning objectives. The students will also be creating many pieces of new art work with our winter theme. The children are happy and growing as we continue to learn all about God's love! We will continue to be kind to one another and help our friends every day!

Carey Swanner - Director –
704-636-3121 - Extension – 110

PRESCHOOL



The holiday season has quickly gone by, the children are back at school diligently working on necessary social and academic skills that will take them to the next grade level. Our teachers do a wonderful job preparing the children and it's time for us to start preparing for the next school year. Late last month, registration opened for the 2020-2021 school year. We still have openings. If you have any family or friends with preschool-aged children, please spread the word about our program. If you have any questions about our program, please contact Patsy Langlais at 704-754-0443.

AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE

The new year is here! We have had a nice long break and are getting back into our routine. We will talk about the new year and changes any new year brings. We encourage the children to always do their best in play and work!

We have Valentine's Day coming up next month and we plan to send cards to college students in the church to let them know someone is thinking of them. We will have a party and do a craft.

Always a busy time!



We have openings in our program and would love to tell you about it. We may be reached at 704-433-6679. We wish everyone a safe, happy and healthy 2020.

"Never be afraid to trust an unknown new year to a known God."

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 James Johnson

2 Rick Parker

3 Greg Mason
Leon Newman
Andy Swanson
Sutton Webb

4 Caroline Clark
Starling Johnson

5 Rachel Buchanan
Mo Culler
Ken Hollar

6 Sierra Braun
Samuel Howe
Earle Koontz
Garrett Miller

7 Court Drake
Roger Malone

8 Connor Conforti

9 Regina Faggart

10 Michael Anderson
Justin Faggart
Glener Gilland
Debbie Insley
Carole Young

11 Mary Sue Leonard

12

13 Ryan Anderson
Erma Scarlette

14

15 Scottie Webb

16 Barry Gainer
Nicholas Peltz
Amelia Steinman
William Steinman

17 Lauren Williams

18

19 Tommy Lewis
Spencer West

20 Jordan Alexander
Dorothy Malone
Barbara White

21 William Clark
Kaleb Robinson
Mel Smith

22 Bill Linn

23 Hannah Smith

24 Jeff Matthews
Ruthann Melvin

25 Ben Weisensel

26 Barbara Saleeby
Pete Stout

27 Molly Alexander
Laura Koontz
Hannah Lineberry
Robert McGee

28 Faye Cline
Debbie Kolkebeck
Will Koontz

29



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Scouts Camping-bus 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Service-Sanctuary 5:30 PM Club 45 - Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM Salisbury Youth-Fellowship Hall	27 6:00 PM ASC, CDC, SDC Board Meeting-B110 6:00 PM Cub Scouts Pack 442-Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Boy Scouts - Scout Room	28 10:00 AM Staff Meeting-Harter Office Suite 2:00 PM Chrismon Class-B104 (Christian Forum) 6:00 PM Church Council Meeting-C206	29 2:00 PM Deadline for Bulletin announcements 5:30 PM Midweek@FIRST-Fellowship Hall 6:15 PM Kids Connection-B101 6:15 PM The Casting Queens-B110 (Conference Room)	30 6:00 PM SPRC-B110	31	1 Pinewood Derby Cub Scouts-Fellowship Hall
2 Scout Sunday 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Service-Sanctuary 12:15 PM Open Arms Ministry-offsite	3 10:00 AM Naomi Circle - B107 (Parlor) & Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Hannah Circle-B104 (Seekers Room) 6:30 PM Susanne Circle-offsite 7:00 PM Boy Scouts - Scout Room	4 10:00 AM Staff Meeting-Harter Office Suite 2:00 PM Chrismon Class-B104 (Christian Forum) 6:00 PM SPRC-B110 (Conference Room)	5 2:00 PM Deadline for Bulletin announcements 5:30 PM Midweek@FIRST-Fellowship Hall 6:15 PM Kids Connection-B101 6:15 PM The Casting Queens-B110 (Conference Room)	6 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 10:00 AM RMN-B107 7:00 PM Mission Team-B105	7 12:00 PM Deadline for Ecclesia articles 7:00 PM Sock Hop	8
9 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Service-Sanctuary 2:00 PM Lector Training-Sanctuary 5:30 PM Club 45 - Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM Salisbury Youth-Fellowship Hall	10 6:00 PM Cub Scouts Pack 442-Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Boy Scouts - Scout Room	11 10:00 AM Methodist Connection-Fellowship Hall 10:00 AM Staff Meeting-Harter Office Suite 2:00 PM Chrismon Class-B104 (Christian Forum)	12 2:00 PM Deadline for Bulletin announcements 5:30 PM Midweek@FIRST-Fellowship Hall 6:15 PM Kids Connection-B101 6:15 PM The Casting Queens-B110 (Conference Room)	13 10:00 AM Rowan Missional Network-B107 11:00 AM Endowment Meeting-B110 5:00 PM Flower Pick Up 6:30 PM RHM Supper	14 Valentine's Parents' Night Out 6:00 AM RHM Breakfast 8:00 AM Preschool 3's Valentine Party-Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Parents Night Out	15 9:00 AM Scouts Climbing Trip-bus 10:00 AM Children's Ministry Play Date-Nursery
16 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Service-Sanctuary 5:30 PM Salisbury Youth-Fellowship Hall	17 7:00 PM Boy Scouts - Scout Room	18 10:00 AM Staff Meeting-Harter Office Suite 2:00 PM Chrismon Class-B104 (Christian Forum) 6:00 PM Autism Society Meeting-rooms B110 (Christian Forum) & B104 6:00 PM Trustees Meeting-Harter Office Suite	19 2:00 PM Deadline for Bulletin announcements 5:30 PM Midweek@FIRST-Fellowship Hall 6:15 PM Kids Connection-B101 6:15 PM The Casting Queens-B110 (Conference Room) 6:30 PM Way of Forgiveness-B102	20 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 6:00 PM Finance Committee-C206	21 5:30 PM Baby Shower Decorating 7:00 PM Mission Bridge Club-B107 (Parlor)	22 8:00 AM Baby Shower - 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus
23 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Service-Sanctuary 1:30 PM Visionary Session 5:30 PM Club 45 - Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM Salisbury Youth-Fellowship Hall	24 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus 6:00 PM ASC, CDC, SDC Board Meeting-B110 6:00 PM Cub Scouts Pack 442-Fellowship Hall 6:00 PM Girl Scouts-Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Boy Scouts - Scout Room	25 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus 10:00 AM Staff Meeting-Harter Office Suite 2:00 PM Chrismon Class-B104 (Christian Forum)	26 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus 2:00 PM Deadline for Bulletin announcements 5:30 PM Midweek@FIRST-Fellowship Hall 6:15 PM Ash Wednesday Service-Sanctuary 6:15 PM Kids Connection-B101 6:15 PM The Casting Queens-B110 (Conference Room)	27	28 Confirmation Retreat-offsite 8:00 AM Donuts with Dads Preschool 3's-Fellowship Hall 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus	29 Confirmation Retreat-offsite 8:00 AM Scouts Camping-bus

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please note the following changes in your directory:

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Christopher McCoy 704-223-5244

Janet McCoy jbm28144@gmail.com

Harriet Murphy 1425 E. Marion St. Shelby, NC 28150

Troy Dibley 4293 Saddlewood Forest Dr. Winston-Salem, NC 27106

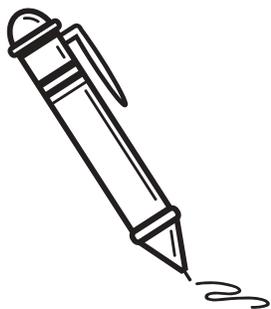
THANK YOU!

I am so thankful for all the wonderful people who made my husband John's memorial a beautiful service, and wonderful tribute to his life. Thank you to the clergy, staff, and the bagpiper. To my Sunday School class [Adam & Eve] and my UMW Circle [Hannah Circle] who provided for the luncheon, and your thoughtfulness in adding candles to the chapel. I was moved to see the candles that reminded me of my wedding to John 44 years before. His memorial service on December 22, 2019 was just right, and I am grateful.

Thank you,
Connie, Jeff, Brantley, and the entire Sheehan Family

many thanks

TAKE NOTE

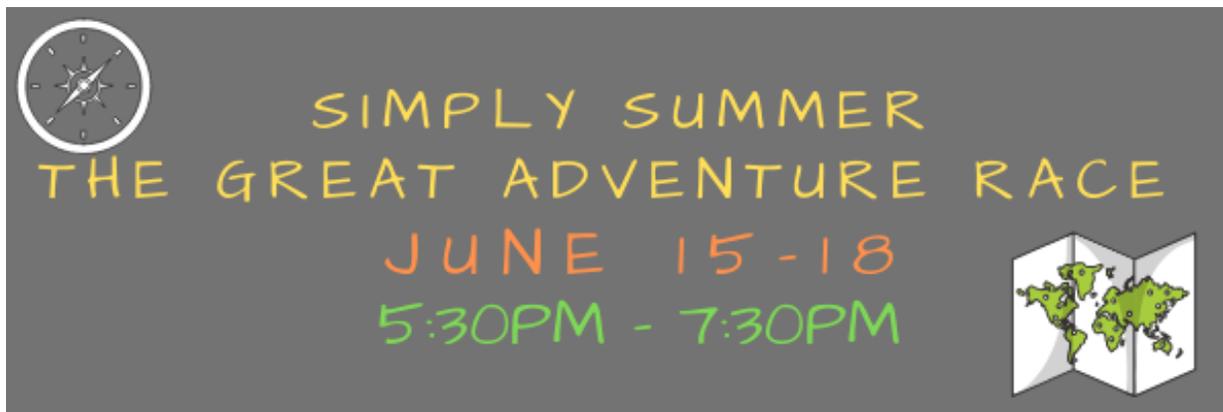


Pastors and staff of First UMC will never ask you to purchase gift cards or wire money via email, text message, or Facebook messenger. If you receive a note that looks like it is from a church staff member asking for these things, or saying anything that is out of our character:

- 1) Please check the source of the email or message
- 2) Report it if possible. These scams are becoming much more common!

If you are not sure about a message you have received, please check with the staff member in person or by a call to the church at 704-636-3121.

SAVE THE DATE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES AND FELLOWSHIP

APRIL 5- PALM SUNDAY

8:30 WORSHIP

9:15 PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST

11:00 WORSHIP, CHILDREN PROCESSING WITH PALMS

APRIL 9- MAUNDY THURSDAY

12 NOON, FOOTWASHING

7:00, COMMUNION

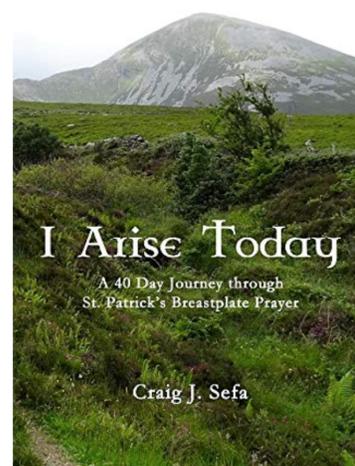
APRIL 10- GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

12 NOON

APRIL 12- EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

AT 7:00, 8:30 & 11:00 AND

EASTER EGG HUNT AT 10:00



Midweek @ First:

Author Rev. Craig Sefa

Rev. Craig Sefa will join us after the meal on February 19, and additionally offer a workshop on Sunday, February 23 from 3-6 at Milford Hills UMC. His new 40-day devotional *Arise Today: A 40 Day Journey through St. Patrick's Breastplate Prayer* will be available to purchase there, or can be found on Amazon (print & e-book)- just in time for Lent!

ECCLESIA

NEWLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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