



the church Messenger

Fair Grove United Methodist Church

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

Growing our church from inside out and outside in; creating a Christian family of God.

Ash Wednesday 2022 Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

In March of 2012, I underwent cardiac by-pass surgery ... double by-pass to be exact. It was unexpected. Only one symptom on one day. Carrying a box from one side of the house to the front porch brought on a crisis of breathing ... roughly twenty minutes to recover to full ease of breathing. A call to the doctor led to a visit to a cardiologist, which led to a visit from a cardiothoracic surgeon. Surgery went well, as you can tell. Several weeks after surgery – REHAB. Rehabilitation (definition): to restore heart and body to a condition of good health, ability to work; to restore a person's reputation (not sure that happened). To rehab or restore is to make new.

The cardiologist told me I needed to go to rehab. That I would receive 12 weeks of strength and muscle-building exercise to strengthen my heart, increase my stamina and improve my breathing. In addition, I would be assigned a nutritionist to rework my diet and eating habits. "Rehab will be good for you", said the Doc and Jean. So, I went to rehab with a positive attitude (as positive an attitude as one who does not care for exercise can have). The therapists met me with smiling faces and encouraging words and assured me I would enjoy my rehab experience. They lied. Two days into rehab and I was certain they were trying to kill me. Rehab, therapy is hard work. I don't need to those of you who have endured rehab how hard it can be. However, I must confess, I felt better after a couple of weeks of rehab than I had felt before or since. (I wished I hadn't told Jean. She has constantly reminded of my confession for the past ten years.) The good feeling of those days of rehab has waned. And it's no wonder; I haven't kept the exercise regimen I was given. This reality in my life has shed light on the spiritual notion to adopt and continue a regimen of constant contact with the grace of God we experience in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.

This may be a stretch, but I want us to consider, as we enter this season of Lent, that we are entering a spiritual rehab, if you will. Every year we journey with Jesus to Jerusalem and the cross; not only his cross but our cross as well. We begin our Lenten journey practicing a piety against which Jesus warns us – "beware of practicing your piety before others ..." Our Lenten journey begins being marked with the sign of the cross, temporarily tattooed on our foreheads with ashes, the burned residue of last year's palm fronds. For many, this marking has been visible throughout the day, eliciting stares and the occasional question of why or the cynical remark that we failed to wash our forehead. While it provides an opportunity to give witness to why we are marked, it should remind us of the grace we are remembering as we receive the mark of the ashes.

For us gathered at this late portion of the day, the display of the mark of the cross will be short lived. We will likely wash away the tattoo of our piety as we prepare for bed. Perhaps, being marked as we are, should remind us of the piety we vowed to follow in our baptism as the journey we live with and treat each other and our neighbors in response to God's love.

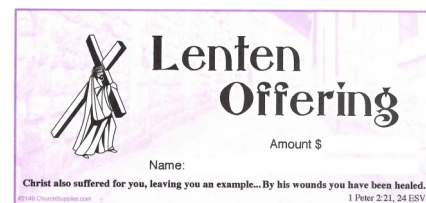
I had a mentor, a Presbyterian pastor friend, who counseled me in my years prior to answering the call to pastoral ministry. On more than one occasion he said to me, "I am not really interested in your profession of faith until I witness that profession lived out in your daily walk." In today's parlance, "walk the walk before you talk the talk." I'm a simple guy. That made sense to me. And I believe Jesus is saying something along the same lines. "Don't practice your piety before others. Don't make an ostentatious display of your giving. Live your faith. Don't be a 'stage actor' just playing a part. Don't do that." (I am paraphrasing Jesus). Jesus continues, "Oh yeah, don't store up things. Where your treasure is there is your heart." And the notion of 'things' goes beyond material stuff ... it is present in our piety, our relationships. In every facet of our lives it is easy to allow the "things" of the world (good and bad) to infiltrate and sully our walk with Jesus.

And so, we enter Lent on Ash Wednesday, gathering in our communities of faith and are reminded of our brokenness and mortality. As we are marked we hear the words, "From dust you have come; to dust you shall return." The mark on our foreheads is a reminder of our mortality. It is also a reminder of our reliance and dependence on God for the whole of life. That mark is for us. It is a reminder of the vows we made at our baptism and/or confirmation – "Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin? Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves? Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church of all ages, nations, races?" These vows begin our journey toward living a cruciform life. A journey we live into as we follow Jesus day after day.

I know these vows, and so do you. Lent is a season of rehab ... a time, which if we allow, the profession of our faith might become ever more a part of our behavior, a part of our being. I say might, because rehab is hard and requires a commitment that will likely take us beyond our comfort zone and lead to places we would rather not go ... The cross is the point of complete surrender which leads to the resurrection, the point of the beginning of new life ... Be intentional during this Lenten journey and see if you can recognize what Jesus saw on his way to the cross, and what Jesus sees through our journey to our cross. tom+



*A gift opens the way and ushers the giver
into the presence of the great.*
Proverbs 18:16



How can we help?

Throughout Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 2, let's save and sacrifice for those who hunger and struggle financially. On Easter, we will bring our offerings in a box or an envelope. Let's pray for our neighbors in our own community and help through the Fairgrove Family Resource Center. Often, the poor must choose: pay utility bills, buy medicine or put food on the table. Your Lenten offerings will make a difference.

We can bring a **canned or non-perishable food item** to church each week for those who hunger.

Provide needed items for those seeking refuge from abuse at the Davidson County Women's Shelter. Let's pray for God's presence and strength for these women and children and share His love by giving much-needed items. A collection box is at the side entrance of the church. Suggested items are listed below:

Paper products: Toilet Paper, Kleenex, Paper Towels, Paper Napkins, Paper Plates, Unscented Baby Wipes, Sizes 2 - 5 Baby Diapers, Feminine Products

Plastic Products: Quart & Gallon Freezer Bags, Plastic Wrap, 16 oz. Plastic Cups, 13 Gallon Trash Bags

Toiletries: Body Wash, Shampoo, Conditioner



We all know the saying, "build it and they will come." Sounds Biblical, right. The actual quote says "If you build it, he will come." And, it is actually from the 1989 film, Field of Dreams. In the movie, Kevin Costner plays a man named Ray. Ray is a farmer that builds a baseball field in the middle of a corn field in Iowa after hearing a mysterious voice say the well known quote above. A whole team of baseball players that are no longer living come to play baseball on that field. The movie all about chasing dreams and self-discovery. It is a feel good movie that you leave feeling motivated and excited about life.

I like to think that the leaders of our church heard those same words when they were discerning on what next steps to take for the youth ministry here. However, I imagine the biggest difference is that they did not hear those words from a mysterious voice, but from God. They saw the need for our youth to have a program of their own and they heard God's call to build it.

When I began my journey on staff here at Fair Grove the youth was on pause. The first few Sunday's were a bit rocky on getting kids here and figuring out a schedule for everyone. Now that we have a groove we have seen attendance rise and become consistent! The conversations that are had during our Bible lessons are not just surface level. We are having real conversations about our faith and who we believe God is! On any given Sunday we average between 4-7 youth. That might not sound like a lot, but my first week we had 0! We have 6 youth signed up for the Spring Retreat in April! We built a program and the youth have come!

Please join me in celebrating the work that God is doing in the youth ministry here at Fair Grove! Also, please join me in celebrating the youth in their faith development and commitment that they have made to growing in their faith! You, the church, heard God's call to build the youth ministry at Fair Grove. God is faithfully providing. I am so thankful to be on this journey with all of you. ~ Christina Gibbs - Youth Director



Don't forget to bring your Gleaning to church on Sundays. If you need to bring them during the week, please call the office and let us know.

All items go to support the food pantry at Fairgrove Family Resource Center.

As always thank you for your continued support and faithfulness to Fair Grove Missions.



Mark Your Calendars!

FGUMC DATES:

- ♦ March 3 – Executive Committee meeting @ 3:00
- ♦ March 11 @ 10:00 – meet to make baked spaghetti
- ♦ March 13 – Baked Spaghetti Sale
- ♦ April 2 @ 9:00 Prayer and Self-Denial breakfast (bring a breakfast item to share)

Preorder yours now!

Loaf pan - \$10

8X8 pan - \$14

½ loaf homemade bread - \$2

whole loaf bread - \$4



Prayer List

Gary Butner family
Deb Lawson Brooks father
Family of Betty Jo Welborn
Dot Russell
Meredith Reynolds
Lawrence Russell family
Bobby Reece family
Logan Bunn & family
Jeremy Lee
Marvine Myers
Morning & Bill Lopp
Darlene Mercer
Craig Gallimore
Alan Dorsett
Sonny Russell
Nan Day
Sharon Sink
Doug Everhart
Margaret Cline
Janie Sechrist

Our homeless friend and neighbor Jimmy
Carolyn Lane's father-in-law
Tom Scott and wife/caregiver Lynette
Madeline Hodge
David Lambeth
Tom Scott and wife/caregiver Lynette
Bobby Swaim
Kevin Dodd
Michael Emerick
Karen Spaul
Jean Widder
Chad Blevins
Evon Hughes
Nina Leonard
Evelyn Parks, 1 year old
Riley Honeycutt, 10 year old girl
3 year old Lynix Nichols and family
Susan Jester
Darlene Mercer

"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

1 John 5:14

Debbie Mayer-Matthews
Teresa Rhodes
Fidel Goodnight
Joe Bales III
Leslie Rierson
Kendall Conner
Lucero Prieto
Regan Sink/ SMA patients
Kay Jenkins
Lisa Foster
Scarlett Merand, age 2



2 Randy Barnette
3 Ruth Dorsett
4 David Rothrock
7 Ronald Bumgardner
7 Gray Harris
9 Kathy Fuller
9 Jonathan Hall
9 Meagan Johnson
10 Jenny Garvin
10 Joanna Welborn
11 Cayton Brown
11 Buck Hall
14 Michael Sweitzer
15 Matthew Dillard
15 Mark Workman
20 Mike Sink
21 Regan Barker
21 Kelly Moore
21 Marlene Burckhalter
23 Tommy Swaim
24 Robert Burcham
24 Ed Smith
25 Jacob Lee

28 Dianne Lee
28 Brian Vertefeuille
29 Eva Smith
30 Ginger McAdams
30 Taylor Thompson
31 Amy Pierce

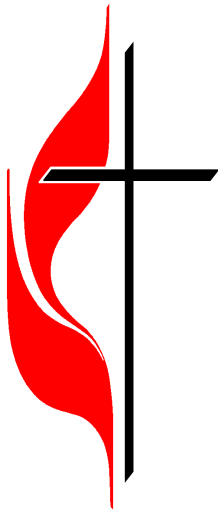
Dear Friend,

I hope all is well with you, and
that you are as healthy in body
as you are strong in spirit.

3 John 1:2



16 Ron & Kelly Moore
21 Eddie & Sheree Jones
29 John & Cindy Dillard
31 Martin & Tami Burkhardt



Fair Grove United Methodist Church

138 Fairgrove Church Road, Thomasville, NC 27360

www.fairgrovechurch.org

Phone: (336) 475-2598 Email: fgumc@northstate.net

Pastor's Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9:00am—1:00pm

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**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

We Thank God For

You!



STEWARDSHIP *A way of Life*

FOR PERIOD JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

YTD SS Attendance AVG	10
YTD Worship Attendance AVG	47
YTD Budget Offering	\$ 29,324.00
YTD AVG Weekly Offering	\$ 3,258.22
Needed each week to make budget	\$ 5,105.07

GLEANNING

FEBRUARY: 53 Year-to-date: 134

Non-perishable food items donated to Fairgrove Family
Resource Center

If your contact information has changed,
don't forget to let us know!



Have you...

...moved? ...changed your email address?

...changed your phone number?

Or, would you like to be added to our email list to receive the
weekly announcement email?

If so, please call us or send us an email with your updated
information!

Phone: (336) 475-2598

Office Email: fgumc@northstate.net

Pastor Thomas Jolly Email: tjolly@wnccumc.net