

First United
Methodist Church
200 W. Gay Street
Lancaster, SC 29720
P.O. Box 608
Lancaster, SC 29721
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The Connector

First United Methodist Church Lancaster, SC
www.firstumclanaster.com

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors,
The People of the United Methodist Church



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Open Minds,
Open Doors,
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SAFE SANCTUARY

FUMC provides a Safe Sanctuary for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. We require a background check of all adult volunteers and training on our Safe Sanctuary policy.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Please submit any information to the church office by *noon on Tuesday* for the following Sunday's bulletin. Information for the newsletter is due on the 25th of the month for the following month's newsletter.

HELP US KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please notify the Church Office at 283-8406 or email libby@firstumclanaster.com with any updates to contact information (address, phone numbers, email address).



HOPE OF LANCASTER

Hope of Lancaster needs the following items: canned sweet peas; canned corn; canned tuna; canned pastas, such as beef ravioli, spaghetti and meatballs, etc.; 1 lb. bags of rice; and jiffy mix. These along with other food items can be dropped off in the HOPE chest outside Shelly's office.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Sarah Gilreath |
| | Kay Stewart |
| 2 | Sissy Gardner |
| | Tori Holland |
| 4 | Kitty Jackson |
| | Becky Stevenson |
| | Paul VanRiper |
| 5 | Lynn Melton |
| | Mary Margaret Waldrop |
| 8 | Susan Hair |
| 9 | Jeff Riggins |
| 10 | John Gilreath |
| | Mary Gayle Henderson |
| 11 | Pat Knezevich |
| | Joyce Morin |
| | Anita Palmer |
| | Elaine Reese |
| 12 | Libby Doster |
| | Lauren Hagins |
| 13 | Shelly Holder |
| 16 | Sam Wood |
| 22 | Delaney Gardner |
| | Kate Pettit |
| | Mary Plyler |
| 23 | Pat Clancy |
| 27 | Tracy Gilreath |
| 28 | Larry Baskins |
| | Caroline Gilreath |
| 29 | Vivian Ferguson |
| 31 | Pam Vaughn |

March 2019

I appeal to you
therefore,
brothers and
sisters, by the
mercies of God,
to present your
bodies as a living
sacrifice, holy
and acceptable
to God, which is
your spiritual
worship. Do not
be conformed to
this world, but be
transformed by
the renewing of
your minds, so
that you may
discern what is
the will of
God—what is
good and
acceptable and
perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

INVITATION TO THE JOURNEY

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed
by the renewing of your minds...”*
Romans 21:2, NRSV

It's well known that Lent consists of forty days. But go to the calendar and begin counting on Ash Wednesday and end the day before Easter. The result? Not forty days but forty-six days! Why? Because the forty days of Lent are fast days, in a general sense. It is a time of discipline and self-restraint. But the Lord's Day is always a feast day within the Church. Therefore, in order to have forty days of fasting, six Sundays must be excluded from the count. Lent in truth is forty weekdays plus six Lord's Days.

Why forty days? In biblical terms forty is a round number symbolizing fullness. It's a span of time sufficient to accomplish what needs to take place; therefore, the number is used frequently and becomes a kind of shorthand for much of sacred history. Rain fell in Noah's time for forty days and nights. For forty days Moses and Elijah (who represent respectively the Law and the Prophets) dwelt at Horeb. For forty days Jesus endured temptation in the wilderness and later the same period was revealed to the disciples after the resurrection. Nineveh was given forty days to repent. For forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness prior to admission into the Promised Land.

We have a forty day journey ahead of us through the season of Lent. It is sufficient time to accomplish what needs to take place: Transformation. Yes, the Lenten Journey is about spiritual transformation – from the inside out.

But first an insight: Too often spiritual formation is seen as something “added on” to our personality that solves all our emotional, psychological, physical and mental problems. When this happens, problems can be repressed or covered over with a veneer of “spirituality” that claims to solve the problem. Perhaps someone has told you, “You just need to pray more, go to church more, read your Bible more, be more obedient to God, deal with unconfessed sin in your life, and everything will be fine.” This is like telling someone with a broken leg that they just need to run more and strengthen the muscles. Our spiritual formation is not an “add-on,” it is the very essence of our being.

We are spiritual beings who are created to seek and to be sought by God. Here are three suggestions for the forty day journey through Lent:

PRAYER – Begin to cultivate a time for prayer that attends not to what you want, but to what God wants for you.

SPIRITUAL READING – Carve out time daily to read, study and meditate on God's truth found in literature both ancient and contemporary. You might find a favorite spiritual classic that is also meaningful to a friend. Share your insights.

LITURGY – Consider approaching the services of worship in new ways. Come expecting to see, hear and experience something each Lord's Day.

In closing, although we walk together along this journey through Lent, we each must take each step for ourselves. May God enable you to walk closer to the Lord. Welcome to the journey.

Peace,

Charles

FIRST UNITED METHODIST STAFF

Charles Phillips, Senior Pastor
Shelly Holder, Minister of Youth and Children
Libby Doster, Administrative Assistant
Novice Baker, Director of Preschool

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Office Hours : 8:30 – 4:30 (Monday–Thursday)

Telephone: 803-283-8406 **Fax**: 803-286-8680

Website: www.firstumclanaster.com

SUNDAYS IN MARCH

March 3 "Down from the Mountain" Luke 9:28-36
 March 10 "Three Simple Rules" Luke 4:1-13
 March 17 "Do No Harm" Mark 8:31-38
 March 24 "Do Good" Luke 13:1-9
 March 31 "Stay in Love with God" Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

IN OUR PRAYERS

Our Members

Bill Murphy, Kay Murphy, Mary Westmoreland, Gene Purser, Art Collier, Jane Carroll, Gertrude Dennis, Sarah Dotson, Travis Berry, Vivian Ferguson, Bill Bradley, Eleanor Brouwer, Peggy Heath, Dixie Roberts

Our Community

Joanne Dahlberg, sister of Linda Snyder
 Hal Plyler, son of Carolyn Plyler
 Marvin Baker, father of Mica Edwards
 Willis Bethea, brother of Lisa Pettit
 Shannon Threatt, daughter of Roberta Whitaker
 Vaughn Miller, father of Andrea Ghent

Our Sympathy

The Sympathy of the pastor and congregation is extended to the family of Mary Westmoreland.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Daylight saving time begins Sunday, March 10th. Turn your clocks up an hour before retiring on Saturday night.

THE UPPER ROOMS

The Upper Rooms are located in the Connector and Narthex. Please stop by and pick up a copy. We have both the small-print and large-print editions.

2019 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2019 Flower Calendar is in the church office. Please call the office at 283-8406 to reserve a date for flowers in the church for a Sunday in memory or honor of a loved one.

LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, March 5th in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a covered dish to share and invite a friend. Debra Gardner from Samaritan Foundation will be our guest speaker.



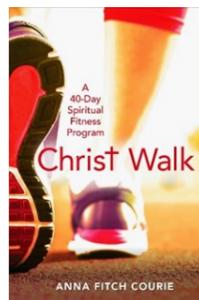
SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

The Men of First UMC are pleased to announce our Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 5th from 5:30 to 6:30

p.m. Join us in the Fellowship Hall for pancakes and sausage as we prepare for the Season of Lent. We will begin serving promptly at 5:30 p.m., so come hungry! Meantime, contact Donnie Little or Willis Ballard if you will volunteer to help with set up, food prep, and clean up. Contributions toward Men's Ministry will be gladly accepted.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

On Wednesday, March 6th at 12 o'clock noon and at 7:00 p.m., we will offer worship opportunities to begin the season of Lent. Each service will observe a time of meditation and the Imposition of Ashes as a sign of God's grace and symbol of our mortality. You may choose which of these times on Ash Wednesday that works best for you to observe a Holy Lent.



CHRIST WALK: A JOURNEY OF SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 6th, and throughout the 40 days of Lent, join us each weekday at 12 o'clock noon at Springdale track at the Recreation Center, weather permitting, for prayer and walking fellowship. All fitness levels will find companionship on this journey of growth. Prayerfully consider joining us as we engage the mind, body and spirit to build up our spiritual fitness. Pastor Charles is your point of contact.

UNITED METHODIST MEN'S BREAKFAST

The United Methodist Men's Breakfast will be Sunday, March 10th at 7:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us as we share food, fellowship and faith.

ONLY GOD CAN

Come join us for a movie and popcorn on Wednesday, March 13th in the Fellowship Hall of First United Methodist Church. Author Terry Tucker will be with us at 6:30 p.m. for a meet-and-greet followed by a 7 p.m. viewing of the film *Only God Can*. The film explores the bond of friends struggling through life's challenges and their relationships with God. Terry, a Lancaster native, has written several books of fiction including *Moonlight* and *Mill Whistles* that is set around the landscapes of Lancaster. The film, *Only God Can*, was based on the book of the same title written by Terry. Many of you know Terry. Come say "hi" and enjoy an evening of fellowship. For more information, please contact Caroline Collins.

GUESTS FOR OUR UMW GENERAL MEETING

Join us March 17th at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a covered dish dinner and general meeting. Human Trafficking is a major problem in our society and is a major focus of concern for the Rock Hill District UMW. We need to learn how to recognize it, whether to act or not, and ways to help those in harm's way. Our guest speakers will be Latisha Walker from SLED and our Sheriff Barry Faile. Please plan to attend!!!!

MARCH COMMUNITY/CHURCH MEAL

Please join us Monday, March 18th at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for our March Community/Church Meal. The Worship Committee will be our host. The menu will be breakfast.

STITCH AND PRAY

The Stitch and Pray Group will meet Wednesday, March 20th, at 10:00 a.m. in the Church Library.

UMVIM TEAM

The Rock Hill District UMVIM Team is planning a mission for North Carolina or Florida to work in areas impacted by the recent hurricanes. Dates are March 24th -30th. Cost for the team will be determined when specifics are available. No specific skills are required except a willingness to serve and cooperate with team members. If interested in either of these, contact Ken Hudson at kenrhudson@yahoo.com. Continue to pray for those recovering and those that are assisting.

EASTER EGGS

As we prepare for our annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt, we are asking for help gathering filled Easter eggs. If you would like to help, you may drop off your filled Easter Eggs in front of Pastor Shelly's office.

CHILDREN'S EASTER EGG HUNT

The FUMC Easter Egg Hunt will be Sunday, April 7th after the 11:00 worship service. Children and their families will meet in the fellowship hall for lunch before heading out to hunt Easter Eggs.

DID YOU KNOW?

The UMW collects cancelled postage stamps! Just cut them from your envelopes and bring them to the church. We need you to leave at least a quarter inch around the stamp to allow us to sell them to collectors. The money received from the sale of the stamps is used to pay for much needed supplies for our missionaries around the world. It's another small thing we can do to make a big difference!

CHURCH FAMILY

Our official UMC web site offers the following: "During Lent, we enter into a season of preparation, self-reflection and repentance when we seek to literally 'turn around' and realign our lives and focus toward God. It is a time to give up things as well as take on new life-giving practices, helping us rid ourselves of distractions and our own selfish desires. By doing so, we seek to live and love as more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ."

I am asking all our church to think about your past when you have "turned around" and realigned your life. It can also be your spiritual remembrance when you connected to your bond with Christ at Easter. Think about it. Please send your written Lent experience to the church for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin.

In His service,
 Sam Wood, Jr.
 Education Committee Chair

THANK YOU

From Share the Warmth Collection

Our Share the Warmth coat drive has ended. Your donations help our school children stay warm - and bring smiles to their faces! This year we collected 46 coats and sweaters, 25 hats, 47 pairs of gloves, and 92 pairs of socks. Thank you FUMC for your generosity and your caring spirit! Thanks, Amelia Davis

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Please mark you calendar for our Vacation Bible School. It will be held June 17th-June 21st from 9-12 noon.

UPDATE

FUMC wants to communicate with you! Please fill in your current information and return to the church office if you have a change in address or need to add to your information. Please fill in the following tear off and drop it by the office, in the offering plate, or email to libby@firstumclancaster.com Circle your preferred way to be contacted.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

YOUTH NAME: _____

CELL/EMAIL: _____

FAMILY NAMES: _____