

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ALAN

It is my prayer that your faith has grown during your our journey through the Lenten Season. I am enjoying the variety of ways that we have made Prayer our focus for Lent. The Psalms are some of the most engaging and challenging literature in the Bible, and I am enjoying the challenge of preaching about them. I also love the opportunity to reflect on Psalms with the study group who is reading *Reflections on the Psalms* by C.S. Lewis. In the prayer workshops, we have talked about deepening our prayer life through intercession, contemplation, and spiritual reading. Finally, the discipline of praying the Daily Office from The Book of Common Prayer has helped anchor my daily prayer life during Lent. I have tried to encourage all of us to take on the challenge and joy of Lenten Disciplines, and I have one more thing I would like to encourage as we enter into these final weeks of Lent. I want to encourage you to consider making Holy Week a priority.

During Holy Week, we have two worship services that precede Easter: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Each of these worship services happens at 7 PM. I want to encourage you to attend these services for the sake of your spiritual experience of Easter. I contend that participating more fully in Holy Week will lead to a more joyful Easter. While Easter is full of joy and celebration, it is important for us to not lose sight of the fact that there is no Easter Sunday without Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. After all, there can be no resurrection without the cross. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday help us to keep that focus by turning our attention in powerful ways to Christ's sacrifice for us. When we make participating in these two services a priority, we experience the fullness of the resurrection because we have followed Christ to the grave. In case you have not been to these services before, I thought it might be helpful to give you a sense of what they are like.

The "Maundy" in Maundy Thursday comes from the Latin word for "Mandate." In the Gospel Lesson for Maundy Thursday, Jesus gives his disciples the mandate to "Love one another." Beyond the sermon, there are two tangible ways that we experience Jesus' love command on Maundy Thursday: Holy Communion and Foot Washing. On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus instituting Holy Communion with his disciples at the Last Supper, and we remember him washing his disciples' feet after giving them the love commandment. During the worship service for Maundy Thursday we offer an *optional* opportunity to wash each other's feet. While the experience of foot washing can be very meaningful, we don't want it to be a barrier to folks coming to the services, so there is no pressure to participate in this element of the service. And of course, as always, the table of Holy Communion is open to all persons. This worship service takes place in our Fellowship Hall and features music from our Genesis Praise Band as well as Resounding Joy, our adult handbell group.

Good Friday is the day where we remember Jesus's Christ's death on the cross. Our worship service for Good Friday is called a service of Tenebrae. "Tenebrae" comes from the Latin word for "darkness." In a service of Tenebrae, we gather in the sanctuary, and we gradually extinguish a series of candles in between scripture readings and music. The service culminates with the extinguishing of the Christ Candle as we remember Christ's death on the cross. The congregation then processes out of the church with one church member carrying a cross out on the lawn of the church as we remember Christ's journey.

There are so many things that happen in our lives during the week. So many commitments, so many different demands on our time. It is my hope that Holy Week can remind us of our central commitment to Jesus Christ, to wanting to **seek relationship with God, to grow in faith, so that we can go for to serve God through care for others.**

Peace,

Alan

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Tricia Givens, Director

And Jesus went to PRAY...

Be Still And Know That I AM God!

We talk about prayer with our children. We say quick prayers before we eat. We tell our children they can talk to God all day, which they can. However, do we really take time to pray with great purpose. Do we make time in our day to share with God how great He is in our lives. Do we take time to tell God how grateful we are for all His blessings? Do we take time to bare our soul and share the things we don't like about ourselves and ask his forgiveness and grace? Do we share our deepest fears and worries ? Do we take time to purposefully ask for help for others and not just ourselves? Do we recognize that his holy spirit is working within us and ask him to use us for His purpose? Prayer that is deep and intimate and not by rote becomes a voice of the spirit of our souls. This type of prayer is a learned habit. When we make a habit for soulful prayer we join the many, which are in sincere prayer every day and our souls are united for those moments.

Help your child design their own heartfelt prayers. Lead them through learned prayers ,but then guide them through their own heartfelt prayer. Help them to share their deepest fears, concerns and praises. You can guide them by sharing a guide line such as this:

Praise God for all HE is

Ask God to be in your heart and to guide you

Share with God your desire to do as HE wants you to

Share with God the many things you are grateful for

Share with God your needs and worries

Share with God what you have done wrong , your weaknesses and ask forgiveness

Share with God your concern for others and our world

Share with God you love for Him and all that HE is.

Amen

Mainly make time to pray with soulful purpose each day. Allow time for God to speak to you!

In His Service,

Tricia Givens

Wesley Kids, Sunday April 7th

We will meet and make a holy week set of eggs to take home. We will help stuff eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt!! We will watch a dvd on the Holy week, while we stuff eggs!!! Continue working g on prayer chain.

Wesley Tweens, Monday April 8th

We will meet and stuff eggs for the Egg Hunt. We will work on a skit for Spring Festival. Continue working on Prayer and our prayer chain. We will have Bible study.

Palm Sunday, April 14th

Children and parents are asked to process in the service that they attend. You will process, as we sing the opening hymn. Help us celebrate Palm Sunday, which is when Christ entered Jerusalem to the sounds of Hosanna and the sights of people waving palm branches in his honor. Palm Sunday begins Holy Week.

Spring Festival, Sunday April 14th (5:30-6:30PM)

Bring a friend and join us for our annual Easter egg hunt, prizes, crafts, professional photo booth, face painting, bouncing inflatables, pizza, and an ice cream truck!

YOUTH—I need your help! Please be here by 3:00PM to help set up and hide the eggs. Let me know if you plan to help by emailing triciag@fumcsalemva.org or call (540) 389-5459. Thank you!

Egg Stuffing Party! All are invited Circles, Adults, Youth and Kids! If you are looking for service hours or just enjoy putting candy in eggs please attend our Egg Stuffing Party. We have two dates set March 24th from 5:00-7:30pm and April 7th from 6:00-7:30pm. A pizza dinner will be provided for both evenings. Feel free to bring eggs and candy as well these evenings, please no peanut candy!

Thank You

Thank you to all who helped with the Children's Sabbath Worship service. The children did a great job and the teachers were a huge part of their success. Sincere Thanks to all who helped with that service.

Coming Up!

Fellowship Dinner, Sunday May 5th

Dinner at 6:00pm of subs, chips, and dessert; "OUR CHURCH HAS TALENT" program 6:30pm

Please start planning on sharing your talent on this special night. We enjoy seeing all the variety of gifts our church family has. Start preparing now to share a song, a dance, a dramatic reading (forensic students we'd love to hear your work) a trick or whatever is your talent. Plan now to participate! We are here to support you! We know our church family has talent!!!

Vacation Bible School, July 15th-19th (9:00AM—12:30PM)

"INTO THE WILD"

Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School! Open to children ages 4 through 5th grade. Third – fifth grade will be traveling all week to serve in our community. Children pre-k 4 – 2nd grade will be doing backyard mission projects here at our church.

Help !!!!! Help!!!! Help!!!!

I need Teachers to serve that week and Youth. Please email me or text me if you are willing to help with this huge mission week at our church triciag@fumcsalemva.org or 540-354-5470. Thank you and hope to be working with you this summer.

Kid's in the Spotlight

This month First Church recognizes Keeley Prosser. Keeley is in choir and comes regularly to Sunday school. She participates in Wesley Kids and Vacation Bible School. You will see Keeley at many church events with her family. She always has a smile and energy to share with those around her. She is a delight to work with and makes a difference wherever she is. Thank you Keeley, for making a difference at First Church.

Children's Ministry Volunteer of the Month

This month children's ministry recognizes Sharon Shepherd and David Laughlin who teach our Kindergarten and First Graders. Sharon and David have taught for several years now and bring energy and creativity to their Sunday school class. They work well as a team and we appreciate their time and talent. The book, "Thoughtful" (about discovering the God given gifts in each of us) has been given to the children's ministry library in their honor.

WESLEYAN PRESCHOOL

Jane Butto, Director

Our Preschool will be closed for our Easter Break from April 19 through April 26.

Looking Ahead

We still have openings for our Fall 2019 preschool classes. Call Jane at 389-5144 to get more information and to arrange a tour. Please let your friends and neighbors about this opportunity.

Summer Camp

Once again this year we will be offering two exciting weeks of summer camp fun for 4 and 5 year old children:

⇒ June 3rd-7th WILD ABOUT SUMMER CAMP Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My! Maybe we will find some on our hike at Green Hill Park.

⇒ August 5th-9th UNDER GOD'S BIG TOP Clowns, crafts and jumping at BOUNCE !

Summer Camp hours are 9am to 1pm. Each week includes a field trip. Camp Fees are \$75 for the week. Stop by the Preschool office and pick up a registration form today!

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Jessica Gehman, Director

Youth Fundraisers for Summer Mission Trips!

Thank you to all of those who supported our upcoming Youth Mission Trip to Indianapolis, IN. We are very appreciative of the notes, prayers, and financial donations we received. In total though the Wall of Money Fundraiser and Pancake Dinner Fundraiser we have received over \$5,000! We are amazed by the outpouring of support from our church family! This will completely cover the cost of our transportation! We are so blessed to have the support of our church family.

Clean Valley Day

On April 6th the youth will be giving East Salem Elementary School an outdoor spring cleaning. We will be helping with landscaping and sprucing up the outside area. We will be meeting from 10:00am to 12:30pm at the Elementary School. Pack your lunch to enjoy a picnic before we end at 12:30pm. (Times may change depending on what the school allows, please check youth announcements for updates).

Mission Trip Participants

We will be having our very first Pre-Mission Trip Meeting on April 14th prior to the Spring Festival. We will be meeting at the church from 1:30-3:30pm. Then if you would like to receive service hours by helping with the Spring Festival by hiding eggs and helping with games. Service hours opportunity begins at 3:30pm.

Also our **final Payment of \$125** for each youth attending is due on EASTER April 21st!

Other Mission Trip Dates to keep in mind:

- ⇒ May 5th: Mission Trip Meeting 2
- ⇒ May 18th: Mission Trip Meeting 3 and Car Wash Fundraiser
- ⇒ June 9th: MANDATORY MISSION TRIP MEETING PARENTS AND YOUTH!
- ⇒ June 15th-21st: Mission Trip

Small Group Info

| Group | Day | Time | Location |
|----------------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| Middle School | Mondays April 1st, 8th, and 15th | 7:30-8:30pm | Off Site |
| High School | Wednesdays April 3rd, 10th, and 17th | 7:30-8:30pm | Off Site |

Youth Contact Information

E-mail: jessicak@fumcsalemva.org

Facebook Group: FUMC Impact Youth Ministry

Instagram: fumc_impactyouth

Remind App: Text 81010 with message: @2015impact

NEW Youth Website: youth.fumcsalemva.org

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Circle 5

Circle 5 will meet Tuesday, April 9 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 116. The program will be "Women Witnessing to New Life". Light refreshments will be served. We continue our mission project "Days for Girls" with Northview UMC and have added washcloths (cotton colored no whites), and gallon Ziplock freezer bags (used as washing machines) collected in front of elevator. Anyone interested in attending one of the workdays, please call Becky at 389-9698.

Circle 9

Circle 9 will meet on Wednesday, April 10th at 6:45pm in Room 206.

FIRST UMC HOSTS VISON DAY

First UMC has agreed to host the Fresh Expressions “Vision Day” on **Saturday, April 27th from 9:30AM – 3:30PM** in our Fellowship Hall at the request of the District. As such, we will need volunteers for the remaining tasks:

- A person(s) to coordinate the serving of lunch (can be catered) and morning refreshments.
- A person to be on site to sell books and materials during breaks

If you or your group is willing to assist with any of these items, please let me know as soon as possible. Thank you to those who have already volunteered to help!

To learn more about the mission of Vision Day, please visit <https://freshexpressionsus.org/what-we-do/#vision>.

FINANCE UPDATE

AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 2019

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Year to Date Actual Giving | \$119,780 |
| Year to Date Budget | <u>\$151,636</u> |
| Year to Date Balance Remaining | <u>(\$31,856)</u> |
| Year to Date Actual Giving | \$119,780 |
| Annual Budget | <u>\$860,818</u> |
| Annual Budget Remaining | <u>(\$741,038)</u> |

CALENDAR INFORMATION

Please note the following weekly calendar items are not represented due to space constraints:

Bulletin Deadline: each Wednesday at 12PM unless otherwise noted

Newsletter Deadline: the 5th of each month at 12PM (or the Monday after if the 5th is on the weekend)

Weekly Choir & Bell Schedule

Sunday

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Heavenly Bells | 3:00pm |
| Chorister Choir | 4:00pm |
| JuBELLation | 4:00pm |
| Cherub Choir | 4:30pm |
| Youth Choir | 5:00pm |

Tuesday

| | |
|---------------------|--------|
| GENESIS Praise Band | 7:00pm |
|---------------------|--------|

Thursday

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Resounding Joy | 6:00pm |
| Sanctuary Choir | 7:30pm |

APRIL 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| | 1 7:00pm - Boy & Girl Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA | 2 10:00am - SKY Board 6:30pm - Cub Scouts | 3 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 5:30pm - Girl Scouts 6:00pm - God & Life 6:00pm - Communications 7:30pm - 9-12 Small Group | 4 10:00am - Faith Journey Bible Study | 5 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon | 6 Clean Valley Day |
| 7 5:00pm - Wesley Kids & Tweenes | 8 6:00pm - Wesley Tweenes 7:00pm - Boy & Girl Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA | 9 10:00am - Circle 5 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 6:30pm - Girls on the Run 7:00pm - Cracked Pots | 10 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 6:00pm - God & Life 6:45pm - Circle 9 7:30 - 9-12 Small Group | 11 10:00am - Faith Journey Bible Study 6:00pm - Girl Scouts | 12 10:00am - Parliamentarians 8:00pm - AA Program 8:00pm - Al-Anon | 13 |
| 14 Palm Sunday 1:00pm - Mission Trip Meeting 5:30pm - SPRING FESTIVAL | 15 | 16 12:00pm - Bulletin Deadline | 17 | 18 7pm - Maundy Thursday Service, Fellowship Hall | 19 7pm - Good Friday Service, Sanctuary CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED | 20 |
| HOLY WEEK (No meetings in church) | | | | | | |
| 21 Easter Sunday | 22 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED | 23 9:00am - District Meeting 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 7:00pm - Cracked Pots | 24 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 12:15pm - Staff Meeting | 25 10:00am - Faith Journey Bible Study 6:00 - Girl Scouts | 26 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - Al-Anon | 27 Vision Day |
| 28 6:00pm - Troop 51 Meeting | 29 7:00pm - Boy & Girl Scouts 7:30pm - 6-8 Small Group 8:00pm - AA | 30 6:30pm - Cub Scouts | | | | |

First United Methodist Church

125 West Main Street

Salem, VA 24153-0887

First United Methodist Church Staff

- ◆ Lead Pastor, **Rev. Alan Combs** (alancombs@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Associate Minister, **The Rev^d Jeffrey Dorsey** (jeff@dorseylawfirm.com)
- ◆ Pastor In Residence, **Rev. Dr. Michael Houff**
- ◆ Director of Children's Ministries & Children's Choirs, **Tricia Givens** (triciag@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Youth Ministries Director, **Jessica Gehman** (jessicak@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Director of Wesleyan Preschool, **Jane Butto** (jbutto@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Coordinator of Music Ministries, **Heather Mitchell** (hmittchell@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Organist, **Judith Snyder** (jsnyder@hollins.edu)
- ◆ Piano Accompanist for Children & Youth, **London Reinhard**
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Allan Davidson** (davidsonallan4@gmail.com)
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Joey Poarch** (joseph.poarch@gmail.com)
- ◆ Office & Communications Manager, **Margaret Woolwine** (margaretw@fumcsalemva.org)
- ◆ Sextons, **Butch & Genia Johnson** (winhoos1@hotmail.com)

Roanoke District and VA Annual Conference

Bishop, **Sharma Lewis** District Superintendent, **Kathleen Overby-Webster**

First Connections (USPS693-120) is published monthly by First United Methodist Church

125 W. Main Street, Salem VA 24153-3615 | Phone (540) 389-5459

Website: www.fumcsalemva.org Email: church@fumcsalemva.org

Wesleyan Preschool: (540) 389-5144