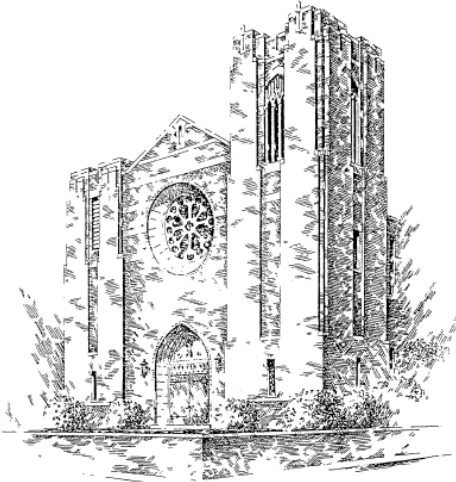


FIRST NEWS

March 2008



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What Kind of Member Are You?

A lot of people are like wheelbarrows —

no good unless pushed.

Some are like canoes —

they need to be paddled.

Some are like kites —

if you don't keep a string on them they fly away.

Some are like kittens —

they are more contented when petted.

Some are like footballs —

you can't tell which way they will bounce next.

Some are like balloons —

full of air and ready to blow up.

Some are like neon lights —

they keep going on and off.

Some are like the sun —

always shining in spite of the storms

that break around them,

overshadowing their light.

They work and work, serve and serve, give and give,

WHICH ARE YOU?

February 2008 Consistory Highlights

The Board of Christian Education reported that the Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, March 15th from 10:30—11:30. The annual church picnic is scheduled for Sunday, June 22nd at Finch Park Shelter #1.



The Property Committee Chairperson, Tom Danze requested ideas from the Consistory referencing the opening of church buildings on Sunday mornings.

The Consistory suggested there be a rotating schedule of volunteers from the Property Committee.

The Hand Bell Choir attended a workshop on Saturday, February 9th at First United Methodist Church. The morning session dealt with techniques of ringing bells. The afternoon session, participants practiced Lenten music.

Ted Smith, Chair of the Board of Community Outreach reminded members about “Touching Davidson County With Love” a community project to be held April 19th. Also, volunteers are needed to stay overnight at the homeless shelter.

Walter Hoffman, Consistory President, gave a report on the search for an Interim Minister. The Executive Committee recommended looking for an Intentional Interim Minister. An Intentional Interim Minister is useful when a church has had the same minister for a long period of time. Intentional Interim, in addition to preaching responsibilities assist church members as they go through a period of self-evaluation and establishment of a church profile.

During the transition period, Reverend June Grubb will be on-call to supply visitation and handle the disbursement of Discretionary Funds for the church. June’s phone numbers are (H) 248-5668 and (Cell) 240-2503.

Jeff Hutchins was elected to fill the Deacon vacancy on the Consistory.

Men’s Brotherhood

By: Clifford Lopp



The Men’s Brotherhood met Thursday, February 21st in the fellowship hall. The meal was provided by Albert and Clifford. We enjoyed the program shared by Frank Leonard and fellowship of church friends.

It was announced that the Davidson Forsyth Churchmen’s Fellowship will sponsor BBQ Chicken plates that can be picked up at Paul’s Chapel UCC between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday, March 29th for \$7.00 per plate. Money raised will benefit the scholarship fund.

The district meeting of the Davidson/Forsyth Churchmen’s Fellowship will be at New Friendship on Saturday, April 5th at 6 p.m.

We will meet the third Thursday, March 13th at 6 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Note date was changed because of Maundy Thursday. Hope to see you there!

UNITY AND SERVICE!

Page 3

By: Walter Hoffman, Consistory President

As we head into 2008 as a church family, it is obvious that this will be a “different” type of year. Our minister of fourteen years has retired. Lee Jessup describes this as our time to “wander in the wilderness.” Indeed questions are plentiful, such as “What will happen to our attendance?” And “will people continue to give to our church?” The simple truth is that this year will be what we make it! This is a terrific opportunity for us, if we continue to move forward together.

To give us a focus during this year, our Consistory has adopted the theme “**Unity and Service**” for 2008. These simple words will serve as a filter for us in determining our course of action. First and foremost, we will stay united as a church family – united in worship, fellowship and service. We have a deep and respectful love for one another and for our church. This love will further strengthen our bonds one to another as we worship and work side by side this year. If we disagree, let’s pledge not to be disagreeable! It is essential that we maintain unity if not uniformity.

First Reformed UCC plays an important role in service to the Lexington area. With your help, we will continue to do our part to meet the many needs in our community. We have a wonderful opportunity to help others in need on Saturday, April 19th by supporting “**Touching Davidson County With Love.**” On this day, our church will join with many other churches and organizations in our county to tackle projects for families in need. Regardless of your skill set, there is a place for you! Ted Smith and Birke McNeill are heading up this exciting day for First Reformed members. Please contact them to learn more and to sign up to help.

Most of you are curious about the search process for a new minister. Since our church only undertakes this process every fifteen years or so, it is important that we seek guidance from experts. Your church leadership is working closely with Larry Walser, our Association Minister, who has many resources helpful to us. We have already received quite an education! Perhaps the most important fact we have learned is that we must remain patient. By its nature, the search process needs to be slow. If we rush through it, we will not be pleased with the results.

We are proceeding with a two-step process. The Executive Committee will first hire an interim minister. Though we do not have a firm timetable, we look to hire a capable interim minister as quickly as possible. This step is also important, since this interim pastor may serve us for eighteen months or more. The interim minister will then lead us through a deliberate process of self-exploration. This will be a very inclusive process, in which every member is encouraged to participate. We will determine who we are and what we want to be as a church. Perhaps we will uncover new avenues of ministry and service in our community. This should be an exciting journey! Once our church “profile” is determined, the search committee will get to work. We have an excellent search committee, comprised of capable, committed members of all ages.

I encourage each of you to support First Reformed UCC this year. Please continue to attend church each Sunday. During February we have enjoyed a variety of supply ministers in our pulpit. In March we will host other supply ministers as well as our Palm Sunday service and the Easter cantata. Don’t forget to bring those offering envelopes with you! And if your phone rings with a call asking for your help on a committee or church project, please offer your help. By staying focused on **Unity and Service**, we will create a great year for our church in 2008. See you in church!

Women's Life Fellowship

Co-Chairs: Raeann Biesecker and Mary Jo Jessup



Women's Life Fellowship met Tuesday, February 12th. With Valentine's Day only two days away, Raeann Biesecker shared a story about the "perfect" heart and Janette Neal and Camille Morgan provided delicious refreshments.

On behalf of the group, we want to thank everyone for their donations during the congregational lunch meeting. We made over 100 quarts of soup and all of it was gone in record time. A total of \$748 was collected for lunch and soup sold. These funds will be used in various mission work sponsored by Women's Life Fellowship.

With the first 2008 project behind us, we jumped right into the next, which will be serving the meal at the homeless shelter Monday, March 10th. We also discussed two more upcoming fundraisers. Our annual Ladies' Night Out will take place Tuesday, April 15th with Virginia Boyd, author of One Fell Swoop as the guest speaker. And, finally we touched on a new exciting and mysterious event that will take place in late fall. Watch for more info about this fun-filled evening for church family and friends.

Please note the date change of our next meeting, **Monday, March 10th**. Since we are serving at the shelter that night we will return to the church where Dr. Lee Jessup will share experiences of his recent trip to Belize. Following his presentation we will have a brief business meeting. All women of the church are welcome to attend.

Important dates to remember:

- Monday, March 10th Serve meal at homeless shelter. Have food donation at the church by 6 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 8th Regular Business Meeting
- Monday, April 14th Setup and decorate for Ladies' Night Out
- Tuesday, April 15th Ladies' Night Out {Tickets go on sale March 10th}

United Friendship Club

Co-Presidents: Eulene Shepherd and Camille Morgan

The United Friendship Club met at noon in the fellowship hall on Wednesday, February 27th with 28 members and friends present. After a delicious covered dish meal Nancy Robbins shared devotions about love and those we love.

We sang some old favorite love songs including "Let Me Call You Sweetheart", "Love's Old Sweet Song", "It Had To Be You", "True Love", and "I Love You Truly".

Everyone enjoyed talking and the fellowship of church family. Our next meeting is **Wednesday, March 26th** at noon in the fellowship hall. ALL ages are welcome!

LENTEN SEASON EVENTS...

March 2, 2008 **11 a.m.** **Worship Service led by Dr. Walter Patten**
Receive 'One Great Hour of Sharing' Offering

One Great Hour of Sharing offers an opportunity for each of us to share with people in need around the world...giving them much more than a handout. When we share our resources, we help to ensure that children suffering from disease not only receive treatment, but enjoy the benefits of a community made safer with proper sanitation and clean sources of water. We partner with a family living in hunger, offering them not just food, but the tools and training to build a sustainable source of income for themselves...improving their world and ours.

March 9, 2008 **11 a.m.** **Worship Service led by Reverend June Grubb**

March 15, 2008 **10:30 a.m.** **Children's Easter Egg Hunt**



March 16, 2008 **11 a.m.** **Palm Sunday**

Worship Service led by Reverend June Grubb



All churches in Lexington are invited to participate in a Community Palm Sunday Celebration, March 16th. Some churches outside the immediate downtown area will meet at First Reformed UCC by 11:40 a.m. The procession from the church will begin at 11:45 a.m. and end at the Olde Courthouse where a brief service will be held that will consist of a Palm Sunday litany and a hymn. NOTE: Palm branches will be provided for our worshipers to wave during the procession. Please plan to participate in this inspirational service.

United Church of Christ congregations of the Davidson/Forsyth District will gather at 7 p.m. Palm Sunday, March 16th at Heidelberg United Church of Christ. Confirmands from all churches will be recognized in the service. The speaker for the evening is Reverend Care Goodstal, Chaplain at Piedmont Crossing. A joint choir will provide special music.



March 20, 2008 **7 p.m.** **Maundy Thursday**
Service led by Reverend June Grubb



This service of communion will be a time of remembrance of the last week of Jesus' life with symbols and extinguishing of candles. Child Care will be provided.

March 23, 2008 **11 a.m.** **Easter Sunday**
Service led by Reverend June Grubb

The Choir of First Reformed UCC will share special music with the congregation on Easter Sunday morning.



Thank You

At morning worship Sunday, January 20th, I was in for a great surprise. Instead of walking down to the front pew where the kids gather for the children's sermon, Amy McNeill had me to sit on the front pew by myself. The children who were there all gathered where I usually stand and each had a brown bag from which they took a special object that I had used at some time in a children's sermon. Each one shared why it was their favorite. Good thing I had my back to the rest of you in worship that day, for I really was "all choked up". I felt go grateful to know that the children appreciated me in such a way and to know that they actually did "get the message" of the sermons.

The following Sunday, January 27th was my last Sunday as your minister. It was a poignant time for me, especially with Laura, Will and Bonita called to stand with me in the chancel. Walter Hoffman, Consistory President spoke words of appreciation that I did not deserve. But it moved me greatly to know that he spoke from the heart and for the feelings of the whole congregation. I just love the United Church of Christ multicolored stole he presented to me and if I am invited to preach occasionally in the future, I plan to wear it proudly. It was also a great privilege for newly elected Mayor John Walser to read a proclamation designating January 27th as Mike Hooper Day in Lexington. And I will display with pride the plaque celebrating my retirement from 35 years of ministry given to me during the service by Reverend Larry Walser, Associate Conference Minister. The "ceremony of farewell" that he led us in was difficult and emotional for me and I think it was for you too. It made me realize how blessed I have been and how much I will miss you all.

Later in the afternoon from 3:00-5:00 you presented me with a wonderful reception. It was delightful to see many First Reformed members there, but also friends from former churches I have served as well as numerous clergy colleagues, and a number of folks from the community that I have worked with in various organizations that try to help those in need. I was thrilled that The Women's Life Fellowship donated \$1,000 in my honor to the Lexington Habitat for Humanity affiliate and that my friend and director of Habitat of Lexington, Debbie Conrad was there to receive the check. Then Walter and Tony Peele, past president of the Consistory, spoke on behalf of the church. Walter handed me an envelope which I opened later that night. I was floored by the very generous monetary gift from you. It will help a lot as Bonita and I go through our current transition to retirement. Also I cannot thank enough those who prepared the great food, those who gathered pictures to show on the large screen in the fellowship hall, and those who prepared a DVD to help me remember the day and to savor the goodness of it all.

Finally, I want to close my thank you note to you by going back to Thursday, January 17th when the Men's Brotherhood held their regular monthly dinner which, of course, would be my last. Before the meeting ended, they presented me with a gold watch which I just love and which I dare not lose. It is the finest watch I have ever owned and in a very real way it reflects the quality of the time I have had in joyfully serving First Reformed United Church of Christ for 14 years. When I look at the watch for the time I will think of the great time I have spent with most each and every one of you. I will think with pride of the fact that my name, for better or worse, is etched in the history and times of this great church. It has been a great time for me. In a very real way, Bonita, Laura, Will and I came of age while serving here. We have entered into our maturity. We thank you for helping us in this phase of our life journey.

Peace be with all of you. Count your blessings and be strong in service. Never fail to be true to your commitment to lift up Jesus and all his teachings. And don't ever forget that "the world is too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love".

Your friend,

Mike Hooper

Thank-you...

Dear Trustees of First Reformed UCC,

Thank you so much for awarding me the church scholarship. This will greatly benefit the rising cost of tuition.

Thank you again.



Sincerely, Jordan McCarn

Dear First Reformed UCC Trustees,

Thank you for awarding me such a generous scholarship. My family and I are very thankful for your support. I will continue to represent my UCC family while continuing my education at Catawba College.

Sincerely, Lauren Klopp

First Reformed UCC Members,

Many, many thanks for the super fruit basket at Christmas. Everything was so delicious, especially the grapes. I enjoyed it for several weeks. Thanks to all for remembering me at such a special time..."Christmas".

Happy Valentine's Day!

Lovingly, Micki Smith

Dear Friends at Church,

It's been a week since you came to see me and the beautiful flowers are still so pretty. Enjoyed your visit so much and all of you are so thoughtful. Thanks so much for the flowers and lovely cards. They mean so much.

Love and Prayers, Frances

A thank you note was received from Crisis Ministry for the \$244.24 "Soup"er Bowl of Caring donations that were collected at the church exits on Super Bowl Sunday. Also, a note was received for the \$90.25 sent from the Ash Wednesday Service.

First Reformed Church,

The Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity wishes to express its sincere gratitude for the generous \$1,000 contribution made in honor of Mike Hooper. Mike invested much of himself into the Lexington community during his tenure at First Reformed. Habitat is one of the fortunate recipients of his time and talents. As he would wish, your donation will be used to further our programs and services so that more low-income families can make their dream of homeownership a reality.

We are pleased that Mike will remain on our board until the time he and Bonita move to Winston-Salem. We have all been blessed by his compassion.

Yours truly,

Deborah C. Conrad, Executive Director

Director of Christian Education

Amy McNeill



Children ages toddler through 5th grade are invited to the Easter Egg Hunt on **Saturday, March 15th**. Activities will begin at 10:30 a.m. and include games, snacks, prizes, and of course an egg hunt. There might even be a special visitor so church members plan to come and invite guests!

March is a month of mixed emotions. Sadness as we face the final stages of the season of Lent journeying to the cross with our Savior Jesus Christ. **Palm Sunday** when we, like the people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem, wave our palm branches in celebration as we join with other churches of the community marching to the Olde Courthouse. **Maundy Thursday** when we will remember the last week of Jesus' life with symbols and extinguishing of candles as we exit following the Christ Candle in silence. (Child care will be provided during this special service of communion) **Easter Sunday** morning when we carry that same Christ candle into the church to celebrate the Lord's resurrection and the choir presents an Easter Cantata. Please mark all of these events on your calendar so we can celebrate together the love of Jesus Christ.

I would like to throw a quick "thank you" out to everyone who helps in the nursery during worship service. It is so nice to have the little ones together on Sunday morning and it allows moms and dads a moment to enjoy the worship service. If anyone else feels this is a place where they can serve the church, please let me know and I will add you to the rotation.



Thank you, and Happy Easter to all!

Sunday School Perfect Attendance

The following had perfect attendance during the month of February:

Katie Strenk	Corinne Gray	Alice Gray	Nancy Robbins	Vicky Green
Gladys Snider	Adena Wall	Katherine Skipper	Joyce B Price	Marguerite Leonard
C.H. Bates	Earlie Hartley	Don Leonard	Frank Leonard	Butch Bouchard
Cliff Lopp	John Potts	John Walser	Camille Morgan	Lisa Nelson
Cathy Waitman	Janette Neal	Clifford Lopp	Paula Lopp	



In January Kid's Club members learned how to mix the primary colors to make secondary colors and then painted a picture with the mixed colors. They also made thank you cards for Reverend Mike to thank him for all he has done for them and the church.

In February we started learning about Lent and decorated crosses to remind us to pray.

The next Kid's Club meeting will be **Monday, March 10th at 7 p.m.** {Kid's Club meets the same time as Women's Life Fellowship}. This will be the only meeting time during the month of March. *Corinne*

Items of Interest

Saturday, March 8, 2008

This date has been established on the calendar this year as the time for friends to offer their talents and labor toward preparing Johns River Valley Camp for the summer season. For more information or to sign up, please contact the church office.

Sunday, March 30, 2008

Reverend Chris Burr will lead our service of worship. He is bringing with him Rebecca and Helmut Schaefer a young couple he met while visiting in Germany last year. Rebecca is blind and was such an inspiration that Reverend Burr invited her to come to America to visit and share her musical talents. She will be with us during the morning worship service at 11 a.m.

Sunday, May 4, 2008 — 3 p.m.

Mark your calendar for a special afternoon of music. First Reformed United Church of Christ Thomason Fund is sponsoring John Einhaus, Classical Concert Pianist for an afternoon performance in the church sanctuary.

Lightbourne Scholarship

Church Women of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ are again sponsoring the Lightbourne Scholarship. Applications must be received by March 10, 2008. Each scholarship recipient must be a member of a church in the United Church of Christ Southern Conference and enrolled for the coming fall as an undergraduate in a college,



Easter

Our sanctuary will be decorated Easter morning with the beautiful cross of lilies. The cost of each plant is \$10.00. Lilies can be picked up immediately following the worship service. To purchase a lily in honor or memory of a loved one, fill in the appropriate spaces and place in the offering plate or contact the church office at 248-2617.

DEADLINE TO ORDER IS SUNDAY, MARCH 9TH.

In Loving Memory of - - -

By - - -

In Honor of - - -

By - - -

MARCH STEWARDS

Ushers: Chairperson: Peggy Bates
 Captain: Steve Smith
 Ushers: Jerry Smith, John Hudson, Vicky Gray, and Ted Smith

Plate Attendant: Roy Bevan

Sound Tech: Tony Peele

Adult Joint Sunday School: Responsible for lesson - - - Willing Workers Class

Social: Hostesses: Myra Thompson and Cheryl Walser

Greeters:

March 2	Edgar and Kivi Miller
March 9	J.W. and Betty Bates
March 16	John Potts and Janette Neal
March 23	Ruth Essick and Vicky Green
March 30	Bill and Cheryl Walser

Nursery:

March 2	Lynn Klopp
March 9	Nina and Ted Smith
March 16	Kivi and Edgar Miller
March 23	Raeann and Brad Biesecker
March 30	Dawn Shaak



Betty Barber {John Barber's Wife}, Jared Perrell {Grandson of Clifton and Harriette Murphy}, Ethel Bailey, L.O. Walser, Sadie Bailey, Mary Louise Leonard, Frances Leonard, Micki Smith, Ike Green, Louise Rollins, Rita Tussey, Henry and Juanita Beck, and Bruce Younts.

FEBRUARY MEMORIALS

Hilda Canady





Jerry and Aurelia Smith

Lori Lopp Floyd

Tony and Lee Ann Peele



March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>One Great Hour of Sharing Offering</p> <p>2</p> <p>9:45 a.m. Joint Adult Sunday School</p> <p>10:20 a.m. Sunday School Social</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>11 a.m. (P)</p> <p>MORNING GLORY CIRCLE</p> <p>Noon—Lenten Service</p> <p>6:30 pm Bell Choir</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Adult Choir</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30 p.m. (P)</p> <p>YOGA Class</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Johns River Valley Camp Spring Workday</p>
<p>9</p>  <p>7 p.m. (WW)</p> <p>CONSISTORY MTG</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6 p.m. (FH)</p> <p>WOMEN'S LIFE FELLOWSHIP serve at Homeless Shelter</p> <p>7 p.m. KID'S CLUB</p>	<p>11</p> <p>6:30 p.m. (P)</p> <p>BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MEETING</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Noon—Lenten Service</p> <p>6:30 pm Bell Choir</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Adult Choir</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30 p.m. (P)</p> <p>YOGA Class</p> <p>6 p.m. (FH)</p> <p>MEN'S BROTHERHOOD</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:30 a.m.</p> 
<p>16</p> <p>Jt UCC Churches Palm Sunday Service at Heidelberg UCC</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:30 pm Bell Choir</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Adult Choir</p>	<p>20</p> 	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> 	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Noon (FH)</p> <p>FRIENDSHIP CLUB COVERED DISH LUNCH</p>	<p>27</p> <p>5:30 p.m. (P)</p> <p>YOGA Class</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30</p> <p>11 a.m.</p> <p>Rebecca Schaefer—German Visitor presents a program of music</p>	<p>31</p>					

Touching Davidson County With Love

April 19, 2008

Goal: To glorify God; to help the needy; to build Christian fellowship

Several churches are coming together to reach out in providing acts of love and kindness in the community as a witness to Christ. Working with local social service agencies, potential projects have been identified. Each participating church will enlist individuals to provide the many varied skills needed for these projects. You have an opportunity in many areas to participate in this wonderful day.

Construction Projects

Financial Assistance

Help with serving lunch

Deliver Gift Baskets

Help with Child Care

Willing to help wherever needed

Non-Construction Projects

Promotion in Our Church

Help with assigning volunteers

Handle Volunteer Forms

Assist with Project Ideas

If you have questions or to signup please contact
Birke McNeill (243-1420) or Ted Smith (243-1063).

First News

First Reformed United Church of Christ
104 East Center Street
Lexington, NC 27292
Phone: 336-248-2617
Fax: 336-248-6163
Email: church@frucc.org

www.frucc.org

Return Service Requested

CHURCH STAFF

Minister-on-Call..... Reverend June Grubb
 Director of Christian Education..... Amy McNeill
 Administrative Asst Paula Lopp
 Choir Director..... Paul Freeman
 Organist Lee Ann Peele

SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday School..... 9:45 a.m.
 Worship Service..... 11:00 a.m.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Lexington, NC 27292
Permit #168