

Keeping Up with Covenant Presbyterian Church News

Wendell, North Carolina

MARCH 2019

Ash Wednesday

Remember that you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.



Ash Wednesday
March 6
6:00pm Worship
6:45pm Pancake Supper

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the season of Lent and this year it falls on March 6. Lent is a period of preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is a period of reflection and confession, study and a renewal of faith. Lent mirrors the 40 day experience of Jesus fasting in the desert wilderness immediately following his baptism. Ash Wednesday worship begins this season of preparation. It receives its name from the practice of blessing ashes made from the palm branches used from the previous year's Palm Sunday. Ashes are placed on the worshiper's forehead with these words: "Remember that you were created from dust and to dust you will return;" reminding us of our mortality and our sinfulness.

This year we will gather for worship on Wednesday, March 6 at 6:00pm to begin this Lenten journey. After worship we will have a pancake supper for those who would like to join us.

Lenten Devotional

You are invited to pick up The Lenten Devotional "Commit to Lent: Make Room for Christ." This has suggestions for weekly reflection and activities for children. Copies are in the narthex and outside the church office.

FROM THE PASTOR



Dear Friends,

At a congregational meeting on February 17, you elected the following folks to serve a one-year calendar year term on the Nominating Committee: Barbara Sneade (chair, and Session representative), Rusty Wagstaff (Session representative), Walker Driver (youth representative), Angelia Page (Presbyterian Women representative) and Todd Turner (Men of the Church representative). As Interim Pastor, I serve as an ex officio member of the committee. It will be the responsibility of this group to consider the characteristics for leadership on the Session and on the Pastor Nominating Committee. Characteristics such as “cooperativeness, willingness to learn, ability to follow through on assignments, openness to new ideas, maturity of judgment, readiness to listen, regular attendance in worship and church activities, understanding and commitment to Presbyterian Polity.” These are criteria set forth by our denomination in a resource entitled “Nominating Church Officers.” They will begin work on creating a slate of names of folks to serve on the Pastor Nominating Committee, to be elected by you at a duly called congregational meeting. Beginning in early summer, they will begin work on a slate of names of folks to serve as elders in the Class of 2022, to be elected by you sometime in September. Please keep these folks in your prayers.

The Session met for an afternoon “mini retreat” in Sunday, February 17. At that time, we reviewed the organizational structure of the church and created some new ministry teams. The new organizational structure is as follows:

Administration

Personnel: Bud Lawler and Barb Sneade, Elder Liaisons

Property: Doug Petrey and Steve Buus, Elder Liaisons

Finance and Stewardship: Steve Hicks, Elder Liaison; Judy McCurdy, Accounts Receivable Treasurer; Carol Rich, Disbursement Treasurer

Communications: Lisa Bailey, Elder Liaison

Clerk of Session: Fred Lanzi

Spiritual Discernment and Growth

Worship: Barbara Sneade and Tim VanGelder, Elder Liaisons

Christian Education: Heather Wolfgang, Elder Liaison

Mission: Bud Lawler and Rusty Wagstaff, Elder Liaisons

Congregational Care

Caregivers: Karen Marsh, Elder Liaison

Fellowship: Jeannie Driver and Paula Daniels, Elder Liaisons

Hospitality/Evangelism: Jeannie Driver and Paula Daniels, Elder Liaisons

The Session is in the process of updating each Ministry Team’s purpose and list of responsibilities.

We invite the congregation to join us after worship on **April 7** in the Fellowship Hall for a **Ministry Team Festival**. At that time each ministry team will have a booth you may visit to learn more about what they do and hopefully, discern where you would like to serve.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask me or one of the elders! We are trying to respond to some of the excellent suggestions we heard during the Survey Gatherings.

Blessings to you all!

Pastor Debbie

YOUR SESSION IN ACTION

Report from February 10 Session Meeting

Elders in attendance for the regular monthly meeting were Jeannie Driver, Lisa Bailey, Steve Buss, Steve Hicks, Bud Lawler, Karen Marsh, Doug Petrey, Barbara Sneade, Tim VanGelder, and Heather Wolfgang. Excused elders were Paula Daniels and Rusty Wagstaff. Guests were John and Kimberly Stevens

The Session approved our Mission Study Statement and it has been sent to Presbytery for approval. The Session's previously scheduled mini-retreat on Sunday afternoon, February 17 focused on finalizing and rewriting our mission and vision statements. The mission and vision statements should be reviewed and revised as needed every time a new pastor is called. Our current ones were last created/revised under the direction of the Rev. Tom Watkins during his tenure as pastor between 2001 and 2008. After the Mission Study is approved by Presbytery, the Pastor Nominating Committee election process can begin and the PNC will use these documents to begin their pastor search.

A very important note follows. Prior to 2015, the election of a Pulpit Nominating Committee (PNC) was allowed before the mission study was prepared and approved. The last two PNC 's did all the leg work that the Mission Study Team and Session have done since Debbie's arrival. The Mission Study process is very time consuming and began shortly after Debbie's arrival. An important part of this process includes conducting a congregational survey and summarizing the results, which the Session did starting back in the fall of last year. The process of calling a new pastor takes over two years to complete and it cannot begin until **after** the previous full time pastor has left the pulpit. It seems a lot longer this time as Claude announced his retirement in September 2016, but did not retire until February 28, 2017. Even though the steps and processes were previously done somewhat differently as noted above, it took well over two years and one almost three years, to call our previous two pastors, Claude Wilson-Stayton and Tom Watkins.

If you would like a written copy of this process and the outline that Presbytery has developed and provides to the Session during a meeting after a pastor leaves, contact Pastor Debbie, Clerk Fred, or any Session member.

Other action items: The Session approved the 2019 Operating Budget and presented it to the congregation at the congregational meeting on February 17. The Personnel Committee recommended job descriptions for the Director of Music Ministry and for the Church Musician. These were approved. Job descriptions for Director of Christian Education and Administrative Assistant had previously been approved.

February 17 Congregational Meeting: The congregation approved the 2019 Nominating Committee consisting of active members Angelia Page, Todd Turner, and Walker Driver (youth); and Elders Barbara Sneade and Rusty Wagstaff. The elders are selected by the Session, which was done at the January stated meeting.

Elder Steve Hicks presented the 2019 Budget as information. He and the Session members answered questions that were raised.

February 17 Session Retreat: The Session began revising and updating our Ministry Team duties and responsibilities that will be included in our Policy & Procedures Manual that is also in the updating process.

Regular monthly Stated Session Meetings are at 7 p.m. on the second Sunday of the month.

Fred Lanzi, Clerk of Session

Christian Education

Elder Heather Wolfgang

Lent family devotional booklets will be available the first Sunday in March. This includes weekly devotionals, mission suggestions, and daily prayer suggestions. There is also a daily calendar activity for children.

The Covenant Youth Group would like to thank all who supported and attended the Mary Poppins Movie Night on February 10! We enjoyed an evening fellowship and fun!

The next CE meeting is Tuesday, March 19 at 6:30 in the Education Building. Please join this dedicated and creative group as they plan for VBS and the spring Mission Trip.

Sunday School

All Sunday School classes for adults, children, and youth begin at 9:45 on Sunday mornings.

Both elementary and youth classes will be studying the same scripture and stories but with a different emphasis.

March 3	The Stories of the Lost	Luke 15:3-10
March 10	The Forgiving Father	Luke 15:11-32
March 17	The Two Debtors	Luke 7:41-43
March 24	The Last Supper	Matthew 26:17-30
March 31	In the Garden	Matthew 26:31-58

The Hood-Underhill class is taught by Bob Fleming and Todd Turner in the Education Building.

The Stomp 'n'Holler is a men's class led by Bill Alden, located in the Education Building.

The Serendipity class is taught by Marc Johnson, meeting across from the Church office.

Coffee and Conversations Mini Course will meet in the Session room until further notice.

January 20-March 3: Lisa Cauley will teach from the book of Ephesians.

Tuesday Bible Study (10:00 am) with Pastor Debbie for a 14 week study beginning on Jan 15th. We will study the Old Testament book of Exodus using the Kerygma Program resources. This study will strengthen and enrich, enliven and inform our faithful living today.

Bible Adventurers

Ages 4-10. This group leaves the church service after the Conversation with the Children. The children will learn about the Bible through a variety of "adventures" with songs, stories, games, and crafts.

Miss Leann and Miss Megan are teaching the books of the Bible in a variety of creative and engaging ways!

Miss Robin and Miss Kristen teach bell songs with the Music Makers every 1st and 3rd Sundays during Bible Adventurers.

Covenant Youth Group: Leaders Mary Selke and Jennifer Cuthrell /Youth meets from 5:30-7:00 each Sunday.

Please consider providing a meal or donation for our youth by signing up on the bulletin board in the narthex and outside the office. Plan to feed about nine people, including something to drink. **Thank you so much for your generosity and for supporting our youth!**

Covenant Youth Group (CYG) celebrated Valentine's month by making origami valentines for our church family and hosting the original Mary Poppins movie! Kudos to our Youth Group members for a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious idea and to everyone who helped with our "Funraiser", especially Linda and Bruce Berry, Alli Buus, Jennifer Cuthrell, Jeannie Driver, Dorine Newton, Angelia and Steve Page, Mike Tomasik, and Heather Wolfgang.

We also met with Bonnie Wagstaff this month and will be assisting with the Backpack Buddies program. Looking forward to continuing our Activity, Reflection, Creativity, and Service in March!

Mission / Outreach

Elders Bud Lawler & Rusty Wagstaff

Carver Elementary Backpack Buddy Program

Don't forget our weekend meals for Carver kids. We need canned vegetables, snack items, breakfast bars, small packages of cereal/oatmeal. Immediate need for protein items—peanut butter, tuna, meatballs, viennas, soups; fruit, popcorn, sweet snacks. There is a designated bin in the Narthex and lists with suggested items on the bulletin boards. We are up to 40 children needing assistance and donations dropped during December. Please help with this important service for the children in our community.

The Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is an on-going project supplying bags of groceries to needy families in our area. Non-perishable foods are welcome.

Bring your food for the Back Pack Buddies and Food Pantry on Communion Sundays.

When we gather to celebrate the Lord's Supper on the second Sunday of each month, we recognize God's amazing gift of Jesus Christ to the world and the incredible sacrificial gift Jesus made for us. The table of the Lord's Supper is a table of incredible love and grace shared for us all. But we are called to be not only receivers of the gift, but givers of the gift. What better way to share than to bring our food to the table for the local food pantry and Back Pack Buddies. Did you know that we provide bags of food to some 30 plus families with children from Carver Elementary School which will enable them to put food on their tables for the weekend? We are inviting you to bring your food - canned vegetables, fruit cups, soups, etc., - on Communion Sundays. The children will collect your food during the Conversation with the Children and then place the food in the baskets at the communion table, reminding us that we are called to be not only receivers of God's grace, but givers. We will continue to gladly receive your food any time, in the boxes in the narthex. Just remember to bring a can or two on communion Sundays as well! Many thanks!

Lenten Lunches

Lenten lunches will begin Ash Wednesday, Mar 6 and will be held at the Wendell Methodist Church every Wednesday until Holy Week. Our church will be hosting lunch on Wednesday March 13th and Pastor Debbie will be providing Devotional this day at 12:15, lunch served at 12:30, cleanup afterward. We will have a signup sheets in the Narthex and outside the church office or you can phone Bonnie Wagstaff at 919-630-7126. The following items are needed to provide lunch:

8 crocks of soups, chili

Crackers

Shredded cheese

Sour cream

Desserts

Tea and lemonade

Help with setting up at 11am, serving and clean up afterwards.

During Holy Week, lunch will be provided Monday - Friday at the Wendell Christian Church and our church will be providing lunch on Thursday, April 18th. Our plans are to serve baked spaghetti (meat & meatless), garlic bread, salad and tea. We will have a signup sheet for this day as well.

Worship

Elders Tim VanGelder
Barbara Sneade

Your choir is preparing Lani Smith's *Stations of the Cross* for Easter. The poignant cantata shares the message of Jesus' journey as his earthly life comes to an end. Through beautiful passages of familiar music, singers and listeners alike are drawn into the emotion and enormity of Jesus' sacrifice for us. If you sing, we'd love to have you prepare and deliver this music with us.

In addition, Jeff and I want to begin an instrumental group. Our current thinking is a string trio or quartet, but the choice depends on the instrumentalists who are interested. You wouldn't have to rehearse every week nor play each Sunday. We'll adjust times according to players' availability. Please let one of us know if you're willing to give it a try.

See you in church,
Wanda



Fellowship and Hospitality

Elders Paula Daniels & Jeannie Driver

Presbyterian Women of the church meet the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We invite all women to come join us for a great night of fellowship when we resume in January. We enjoy lively discussions about what the Bible is saying to us and how we can put the message into action in our daily lives. Come and join us as we all journey together to strengthen our faith.

Breakfast Fellowship: February 11. Come join us for breakfast. Everyone is welcome! The second Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Zebulon at McLean's Restaurant.

Handy Hands helps with home repairs and chores for those who find it difficult to manage by themselves. They have installed several ramps for those with problems with mobility. Need is more important than ability to pay, so donations are appreciated.

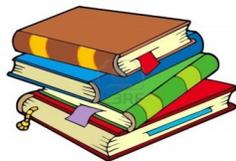
Join a special care ministry: Contact Paula Daniels at 919-675-0363 or Jeannie Driver at 919-365-5521 for more information.

Prayer Shawl: Both knitters and crocheters are welcome! We meet at 5:00 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month and create shawls & throws for comfort in time of need. Want to join the group? Experienced knitters are happy to help & share patterns. Some supplies are available. Call Christine Mailliard at 919-366-0883 for more information or if you know of someone who could use a shawl.

Martha's Ministry provides meals in time of need. If you are experiencing difficulties, illness, stress or any other reason, and having a meal delivered would give you a lift, please let the church office know (919-365-7979). If you are able to help prepare and/or deliver meals, please call Paula, Jeannie or the church office.

Men's Breakfast: The third Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the Church's Education Building. The breakfast is held in the kitchen in the Education Building.

Upcoming Events



Covenant Book Group

We will meet on Thursday, March 21 at 7:00 PM in the Page 158 Books store, 21 North Main Street, Wendell.

We will be discussing “A Man Called Ove” by Fredrik Backman. We had a wonderful time last month – lots of interesting conversation about “Varina,” good laughs, and outstanding fellowship. Hope you will come join us in March!

If you have questions, contact Lisa Bailey or call the church office.

The Start of a New Dinner Group

Are you interested in getting to know other Covenant folks?

Tired of cooking and want to give some local restaurants a try?

Come join us on Saturday, March 30 for dinner at 7:00 pm at

Sopranos Grille, 1030 North Rogers Lane, Knightdale. Each month we will try a different restaurant – the last Saturday of the month. Questions? Contact Lisa Cauley or the church office.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Peggy Nickola joined by transfer of letter from The Lutheran Church. She is a long time resident of Wendell and we welcome her!

Miles Jonathon Bills received infant baptism on February 24. Along with parents Matthew, Nicole and brother Finley, we welcome him into our family of faith.

**COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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“Celebrating the Past—Building the Future”