



THE CALLER

Kyle's Korner

At the January meeting of the Elders, I brought in an article to read and discuss. The article was written by Episcopal priest and writer Tom Ehrich and distributed by the Religion News Service on January 7, 2016. It was commentary piece on the idea that Church shouldn't be this hard. Ehrich writes, "An assembly that exists to help people shouldn't be so willing to hurt people — by declaring them worthless, unacceptable, undesirable or strangers at the gate. An assembly that should relax into the serenity of God's unconditional love shouldn't be so filled with hatred and fear. An assembly that should do what Jesus did shouldn't be so inwardly focused, so determined to be right, so eager for comfort, so fearful of failing. An assembly that follows an itinerant rabbi shouldn't be chasing permanence, stability and property. An assembly whose call is to oneness and to serving the least shouldn't be perpetuating hierarchies of power and systems of preference."

I don't know about you, but I feel indicted by those words. I know there are times and ways in which I have said things that hurt others. I have judged others by standards that aren't consistent with Jesus' teaching and example. In my insecurity, I have sought to declare my position as the right one, to the exclusion of listening to others' perspectives.

Living a life of faith is hard. It's hard to know what's best when the self-sacrifice and renewal Jesus calls us to interferes with the desires to build, to possess, and to adhere to the principles of growth of the organization. Often our humanness, our brokenness gets in the way of following Christ's example. Too often, though, our brokenness carries more power and influence than the grace Christ calls us to live. Because our brokenness prevails, church doesn't feel like a community of disciples of Christ, but a den of danger. Too often we act as if the Church is a haven for saints. Instead, the Church is a hospital for sinners -- needing healing, redemption, and renewal.

Ehrich also writes his vision for what the church should be. He writes, "Church should be a safe place — safe to be oneself, safe to make one's confession, safe to love whoever one feels called to love, safe to imagine more, safe to fail. Instead, church often is a dangerous place, where people feel guarded, self-protective, hemmed in by tradition and expectation, required to obey rules.

(continued on page 2)



January Budget Corner

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| General Budget received in January | \$17,462.00 |
| Building Accounts received in January | \$ 0 |

“Church should be different from society. Instead, it plays by the same rules: get mine, be first, be right, punish the weak, exclude the different, reward the wealthy. Our society needs healthy faith communities. But neither society nor God has much need for religious institutions grounded in right-opinion, self-serving and systemic danger.”

I wonder what our church might look like if we let go of the wrongs we experience and embrace the grace for what God has next. I wonder what church might look like if we held on to the sacred memories of how God welcomes us to the Table of Grace to be fed. I wonder what church would look like if we didn't judge others on their journey and allowed them to freely and openly approach the Table of Grace too. What, in our attitudes and actions might need to change in order for others to experience that?

I'll see you Sunday.

Kyle



Sunday, February 5, 2017 is "Super Bowl" Sunday in the National Football League. At First Christian Church, we are celebrating "Souper Bowl of Caring" Sunday as we seek to tackle hunger. At the close of worship our children, youth, and their leaders will be holding soup pots at the exit doors to accept donations for our local soup kitchen. All money collected will go to help fund the Bedford County Ministerial Association Soup Kitchen. Cash is simple. If you write a check, please make the check payable to "First Christian Church" and designate "Soup Kitchen" in the memo line.

The Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990 with 22 churches in South Carolina with the goal of collecting \$1 from each person in worship on the day the National Football League plays its biggest, most watched game to help end hunger in their local communities. They collected \$5,700. In 2016, nearly 6900 congregations and groups collected more than \$10,500,000 -- helping more than 5100 charities and ministries that feed people in need.

First Christian Church has a strong history in participating in this endeavor. This year, with the ecumenical soup kitchen ministry, we have a direct path to giving and feeding people in our community. On Sunday, help First Christian Church tackle hunger.



VS



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH NIGHT AT MTSU!

Sunday, February 26, MTSU Raiders girls basketball team will be playing the UAB Blazers. All seats will be grouped together in one section for a night of fun, family and Basketball! Tickets are only \$7.00! Payment is due no later than February 15. Please make checks payable to First Christian Church and give to Karen McDonald. The van will be available for those who would prefer not to drive. We will have a sign-up sheet on the Communication Table as the time gets closer for those who would like to go on the van. The van can only take 15 passengers. First come, first served!

GOOD SAMARITAN Food Needs

Thank you again to everyone for your generosity in supporting Good Samaritan. No matter what time of year it is, Good Sam is always in need of food. We will continue to ask for any of the following: canned meats, soup, canned vegetables and fruit, cereal, crackers and peanut butter. You may also bring other kinds of food that is not mentioned above. Your continued support is very much appreciated!



CHILDREN'S WORSHIP TIME

Worship and Wonder: Children ages 3 years old through fifth grade are welcome to join Donnye and Bonnye Fields following the praise hymn the 1st & 3rd Sunday of this month for their own special time of worship in the Worship and Wonder room and sometimes in Class Rooms 2 & 3.

February 5 Worship and Wonder
February 19 Worship and Wonder

SUNDAY SCHOOL

We will continue to have Sunday school for adults. The Adult SS Class, led by Ruth Cartwright, meets in the Parlor. The Caring & Sharing Class, led by Wayne Schumann, meets in room 11. The Cross & Chalice Class continues to meet in room 15. Classes begins at 9:00 am.

ELDERS MEETS

The Elders will meet Sunday, February 19, at 8:00 am.

MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will host a Congregational Valentine's Breakfast on February 12, at 7:45 am. Kyle will continue with our monthly Congregational Conversation immediately following breakfast.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

As we begin the season of Lent, Rev. Kyle will be doing an Ash Wednesday Service, March 1, at 6:00 pm. Please plan to join us as we move into the Lenten season and the death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

CWF will meet February 14, 2017 beginning with Helping Hands at 9:30 am, followed by a luncheon (provided) at 11:30 am. Rev. Lanita Monroe will be speaking to us about the Community Soup Kitchen.

CIRCLE I

Circle I will meet, February 21, 2:00 pm in the Parlor

CIRCLE III

Circle III will meet Tuesday, February 21 at 4:30 pm

In Nursing Homes, Hospitals or Assisted Living

Carriage House Inn

Rose Marie Clark
Mary Lynn Prince

The Heart Remembers

Mattie Ray Wiser

Brookdale Senior Living

Cornelia Riddle

Celebration Way

Harriet Melson

At Home

Lisa Adams
Ernie Brewbaker
Wallace & Brenda Hancock
Monk Haynes
Virginia Ann Haynes
Kevin Johnson
Miles McCullough
Annette Palmer
Naomi Thompson
Ted York



We mourn the loss of Albert Smithson, Kathy Reed's "Papa" and Matthew Thompson, Kerry Thompson's son and Naomi Thompson's grandson.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Albert Smithson

Bob & Janie Burke
Rose Marie Clark
Charles & Karen Sue McDonald
Anne McMahan
Bobby & Freida Newell

Reading Through the Bible Schedule

February 2017

| | | |
|----|-------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Micah 4-5 | Isaiah 52 |
| 2 | Micah 6-7 | Isaiah 53 |
| 3 | 2 Thessalonians | Isaiah 54 |
| 4 | 2 Peter | Isaiah 55 |
| 5 | OFF | |
| 6 | Zephaniah | Isaiah 56 |
| 7 | Jude | Isaiah 57 |
| 8 | Haggai | Isaiah 58 |
| 9 | Zechariah 1-3 | Isaiah 59 |
| 10 | Zechariah 4-6 | Isaiah 60 |
| 11 | Zechariah 7-9 | Isaiah 61 |
| 12 | OFF | |
| 13 | Zechariah 10-12 | Isaiah 62 |
| 14 | Zechariah 13-14 | Isaiah 63 |
| 15 | Malachi 1-2 | Isaiah 64 |
| 16 | Malachi 3-4 | Isaiah 65 |
| 17 | Obadiah | Isaiah 66 |
| 18 | Joshua 1-3 | Psalms 52 |
| 19 | OFF | |
| 20 | Joshua 4-6 | Psalms 53 |
| 21 | Joshua 7-9 | Psalms 54 |
| 22 | Joshua 10-12 | Psalms 55 |
| 23 | Joshua 13-15 | Psalms 56 |
| 24 | Joshua 16-18 | Psalms 57 |
| 25 | Joshua 19-21 | Psalms 58 |
| 26 | OFF | |
| 27 | Joshua 22-24 | Psalms 59 |
| 28 | 1 Corinthians 1-2 | Psalms 60 |

February 2017



| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|-----|--|---|----------------------|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 7 pm Choir | 2 9:30 am CBS | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 7 pm Choir 4:30 pm Circle III | 9 9:30 am CBS | 10 | 11 |
| 12 7:45 am Valen- tine Congregational Breakfast & Con- versation | 13 | 14 9:30 am Helping Hands 11:30 am CWF | 15 7 pm Choir | 16 9:30 am CBS | 17 | 18 |
| 19 8 am Elders 11:15 am Board | 20 | 21 2 pm Circle I 4:30 pm Circle III | 22 7 pm Choir | 23 9:30 am CBS | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | March 1 6 pm Ash Wednesday Service | | | |



February Birthdays

- 3rd Carol Price
- 5th Henry Hulan
- 21st Joyce Bell
- 22nd Amy Mitchell
- 27th Evelyn Coffey
- Susan Price

February Elders

- Rhonda Reed
- Linda Yockey

February Deacons

- Buddy Taylor
- Ellen Taylor
- Nichole Yockey