

Striving to become living expressions of God's extravagant grace and love.

Connection

The newsletter of First Reformed United Church of Christ, Burlington, NC

www.firstreformeducc.org

**March
2021**

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Holy Week Schedule

Although no decisions have been made as to when we may resume in-person worship services, please make plans to observe these special services.



Palm
SUNDAY
March 28



Good
FRIDAY
April 2

A virtual Good Friday
Tenebrae Service
will be led by the
members and music staff
of
Life's Journey UCC,
First Christian UCC,
and First Reformed UCC



Easter
SUNDAY
April 4

Q&A Sessions for *The Year of the Bible* scheduled for March

At the beginning of the year, members and friends of FRUCC were invited to participate in a daily Bible reading program called *The Year of the Bible*.

Those who have kept up with the readings are about to complete the book of Leviticus and are nearly half way through the book of Acts. Good job!

If you haven't kept up with the readings, or didn't get started on January 1, don't give up. All is not lost. Simply choose any day to start and move forward from there. The readings for March are provided in the next column. You can also access the reading schedule by picking up *The Year of the Bible* companion at the church or visiting the church's website.

Several church members have indicated a desire to discuss these readings in order to gain greater clarity on some of the content. In response to those requests, Phil has decided to start offering bi-weekly (every other week) Q&A Sessions for anyone wanting to participate. Scheduled for Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m., the first of these virtual sessions will be held **March 2, 16, and 30**.

A link for these sessions will be provided via the pastor's weekly email message.



**The Virtual Fellowship Gatherings
will now be offered bi-weekly.**

**Upcoming sessions will be held
March 9 & 23.**

Daily Bible Readings for March

<u>Day</u>	<u>Scripture Reading</u>
1	Numbers 6,7 / Psalm 26, 27
2	Numbers 8, 9 / Acts 16
3	Numbers 10, 11 / Acts 17
4	Numbers 12-14 / Psalms 28, 29
5	Numbers 15, 16 / Acts 18
6	Numbers 17-19 / Acts 19
7	Numbers 20, 21 / Acts 20
8	Numbers 22, 23 / Psalm 30
9	Numbers 24, 25 / Acts 21
10	Numbers 26, 27 / Acts 22
11	Numbers 28, 29 / Psalm 31
12	Numbers 30, 31 / Acts 23
13	Numbers 32, 33 / Acts 24
14	Numbers 34, 35 / Acts 25
15	Numbers 35 / Deuteronomy 1 / Psalm 32
16	Deuteronomy 2,3 / Acts 26
17	Deuteronomy 4, 5 / Acts 27
18	Deuteronomy 6, 7 / Psalm 33
19	Deuteronomy 8, 9 / Acts 28
20	Deuteronomy 10, 11 / Romans 1
21	Deuteronomy 12-14 / Romans 2
22	Deuteronomy 15, 16 / Psalm 34
23	Deuteronomy 17, 18 / Romans 3
24	Deuteronomy 19, 20 / Romans 4
25	Deuteronomy 21, 22 / Psalm 35
26	Deuteronomy 23, 24 / Romans 5
27	Deuteronomy 25, 26 / Romans 6
28	Deuteronomy 27, 28 / Romans 7
29	Deuteronomy 29, 30 / Psalm 36



Financial Report

	COMPARISON	2020	2021
		January	January
	INCOME		
1	Contributions	5,744	2,000
2	Other Income	175	40
3	Clapp Endowment	40,000	0
4	Fowler Endowment	7,950	
5	Fowler Restricted		
6	Total Income	53,869	2,040
	EXPENSES		
7	Staff Compensation	18,452	17,422
8	Benevolence	247	98
9	Programming and Worship	483	441
10	Operating Expenses	7,555	5,318
11	Total Expenses	26,737	23,279

Contributions received from the members & friends of FRUCC will be ESSENTIAL to meeting this year's budget

Whatever your budget allows you to contribute, please remember to give regularly.

Your support helps sustain the mission and ministry of First Reformed UCC.

Narrative Summary

Revenue

1. Jan 2021 Contributions were **\$3,744 less** than Jan 2020 Contributions.
2. Jan 2021 Other Income was **\$ 135 less** than Jan 2020 Other Income.
3. Endowment subsidies were not deposited until the first week of Feb.

Expenses

4. Jan 2021 Staff Compensation was **\$1,030 less** than in Jan 2020.
5. Jan 2021 Benevolence was **\$149 less** than in Jan 2020.
6. Jan 2021 Programming & Worship was \$42 less than in Jan 2020.
7. Jan 2021 Operating Expenses was **\$2,237 less** than in Jan 2020.
8. Jan 2021 Total Expenses were \$3,458 less than in Jan 2020.

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

Net Gain/Loss

9. In Jan 2020 we had a Net Gain of \$27,132 because of the Endowment Subsidies.

Endowment Committee Minutes

The Endowment Committee met on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 7 p.m. Members present: Tom Burgess, Pete Burgess, Steve Balog, Susan Puckett, Kyle Hayes, Suzan Evans, and Phil Myers (ex-officio).

Tom Burgess called the meeting to order and asked for nominations for 2021 leadership positions. Tom shared that he would not be able to continue serving as the chair due to an upcoming surgery and the physical therapy which will follow.

After inviting several persons to consider different leadership positions, a motion was made to accept the following slate of officers: Chair - Steve Balog; Vice-chair - Kyle Hayes; Treasurer - Pete Burgess; Secretary - Phil Myers. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. As the newly elected chair, Steve led the rest of the meeting.

Kyle made a motion to approve the October 28, 2020 Minutes. Susan seconded. Approved.

Pete distributed a handout showing the fund balances for both the Clapp Endowment and Fowler Estate. As of 12/31/20, the balances were:

Clapp	=	\$ 4,548,608
Fowler	=	\$ 979,971

Phil shared handouts containing information on the yearly performance of each account as well as an overview of ministry areas that have received support from these funds. In the way of summary, these reports showed the following:

Clapp Endowment

Overall Performance

Original gift received from Marvin & Eva Clapp	5,006,612
Total Income received since 2003	+ 3,787,818
Total Disbursements since 2003	- <u>4,245,822</u>
<i>(includes paying off renovation loan in 2012)</i>	
Balance of the Clapp Endowment on 12/31/20	4,548,608

Breakdown of Disbursements

People & Programs	1,254,918
Mission & Outreach	320,096
Building & Grounds	2,572,404
Other	98,404

(continued next page)

Endowment Committee Minutes (continued)

Fowler Estate

Overall Performance

Original gift received from Estate of Clyde Fowler	821,185
Total Income received since 2016	+ 302,882
Total Disbursements since 2016	- <u>144,096</u>
Balance of the Fowler Estate on 12/31/20	979,971

Fowler Estate - Breakdown of Disbursements

People & Programs	120,013
Mission & Outreach	24,083

Before reviewing the funding requests for 2021, the committee discussed the amount of funds that would be available for distribution. As a general rule of thumb, the majority of endowments strive to spend no more than 4% of the fund balances. After discussing the pros and cons of applying this calculation to the current balances (12/31/20) or the balances provided to the Budget Committee last fall (10/28/20), the committee chose the latter. Accordingly, it was determined that funds available for distribution in 2021 would include: \$172,088 from the Clapp Endowment and \$36,297 from the Fowler Estate.

The first two applications reviewed were those submitted by the Consistory requesting support for the 2021 Operating Budget. The committee approved subsidizing the budget with \$172,088 from the Clapp Endowment and \$36,297 from the Fowler Estate.

The third application requested support for the annual scholarships awarded in Clyde Fowler's memory. The committee approved the amount of \$3,750 so that three scholarships may be awarded at \$1,250 each. This includes: (a) supporting the 2019 recipient for the third of four years; (b) supporting the 2020 recipient who postponed his entry to college due to the pandemic; and (c) supporting the yet to be named 2021 recipient.

Submitted by the Young Musicians of Alamance, the final application requested \$60,000 in support of its operating budget. While the committee is supportive of the program and its values, the funds are not available this year. Aware that there is another source of funds that could possibly be accessed, (the remaining dividends received from the liquidation of Copeland Fabrics), the committee will recommend that YMA share its needs with the Consistory for consideration.

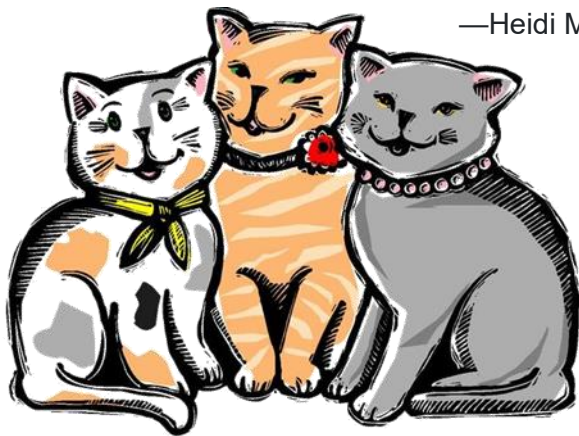
The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Phil Myers
Recording Secretary

Feline-informed faith

I am the epitome of a “cat lady”: Each of my five felines has taught me a bit about faith. As I settle into bed, Piccolo presses his body tightly against mine. As I type, Tina sits on my lap, often reaching to rest a paw on my hand (the one on the mouse, of course!). Pumpkin cries persistently, even raising his front legs like toddler arms when he wants to be picked up. Yet, as any cat lover knows, these animals can be stubbornly aloof — at least until mealtime.

My cats’ actions make me think about how intentional daily Bible reading is like pressing myself against God. When I see God’s presence in nature or someone’s kindness, pausing to give thanks is like reaching out to touch God’s hand. When I feel needy, I can stretch my spirit toward God’s embrace with an honest prayer. And when I make myself aloof — as, alas, I sometimes do — I can rejoice that God’s love always calls me back, to nourish me again.



—Heidi Mann

Stay Connected

If you haven't done so already, please make sure you join FRUCC's social media accounts.

Website:

firstreformeducc.org

Facebook:

First Reformed UCC of Burlington, NC



Instagram:

[frucc_of_burlington_nc](https://www.instagram.com/frucc_of_burlington_nc)



The comfort connection

Amid suffering, we might feel alone and wonder what good can come of it. But later we may discover ourselves equipped to serve precisely because of what we experienced.

Writer and civil rights activist James Baldwin stated: “You think your pain and heartbreak are unprecedented ... but then you read. [Books] taught me that the things that tormented me the most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive or who had ever been alive.” Whether through books or direct human interaction, we often learn that our suffering connects us to other people and that our pain gains meaning by moving us to support someone else who’s hurting.

Paul writes of such connection: “Praise be to ... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV). May you share the comfort you have received from God with others in pain. As a bonus, along the way you’ll realize you’re not — and never have been — alone.

Adult Education Class

offered online

each Sunday at 10 a.m.

Weekly Lectionary texts available at

lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu

Want to participate?

Look for the link provided
in the pastor’s weekly email.

Or request the link by emailing
the pastor at fruccrev@gmail.com

Looking Ahead

Thu Apr 1	Maundy Thursday
Fri Apr 2	Good Friday
Sun Apr 4	Easter Sunday
Sun May 9	Mother's Day
Sun May 23	Pentecost Sunday
Mon May 31	Memorial Day Luncheon
Sun June 20	Father's Day

When God giggles

Before dinner, our family was preparing to pray, which we do by holding hands. Upon discovering that one child hadn't washed his hands, my husband struck a contorted pose to avoid physical contact. The mealtime blessing quickly dissolved into laughter as we each peeked at him.

Afterward, as we passed around the food, I asked, "What do you imagine God thought about us laughing during prayer?" One child quickly replied, "I think he was laughing right along with us."

Yes! Although prayer is reverent, God invites us to converse with words, emotions — and even giggles!

—Janna Firestone

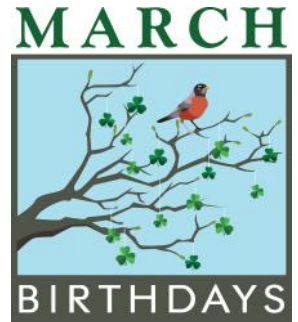
Meals on Wheels

Delivery Dates

March 15 - 19

Birthdays

- 2 Abbi Brandenburg
- 5 Amy Deal
- 17 Bill Hindman
Pete Burgess
- 18 Kyle Hayes
Lauren Chappell
- 24 Claudette Fitzgerald
- 31 Steve Lawrie



Setting captives free

Though St. Patrick's Day has become a secular "holiday," March 17 commemorates the life of a Christian missionary. St. Patrick grew up in a Christian home in Britain but wasn't very devout until he experienced crisis. As a teen, he was captured and sold into slavery in Ireland, escaping after six years. "The Lord opened my unbelieving eyes" in Ireland, Patrick later said. God led him back there, and he converted tribe after tribe to Christianity.



In *Confessio 61*, St. Patrick writes, "I testify in truth and in great joy of heart before God and his holy angels that I never had any other reason for returning to that nation ... except the Gospel and God's promises."

Church Office Hours

MWF - 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

TT - 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.



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Suggestions and contributions for our newsletter
are welcomed and encouraged.
The deadline for each issue is
the 15th of each month.

Sunday Services

9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Time
11:00 a.m.	Worship

All are welcome!

Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.



Striving to become living expressions of God's extravagant grace and love.

Connection

First Reformed United Church of Christ
513 West Front Street
Burlington, NC 27215

- RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED -



RETHINKCHURCH®

Lent 2021

Photo-a-Day Challenge

Have you been participating in the **Lent 2021 Photo-a-Day Challenge**?

Each day during Lent, the church is posting a word of the day on its Facebook and Instagram accounts. We invite you to pause, reflect and post a response to that word in the "Comment" section of the post. Or if you prefer, you can share a response on your own social media page(s). Your post should illustrate how you perceive each word of the day. No explanation needed. You can share a photo, poem or even a simple thought.

If you want to join in, then visit enter either of these links into your browser:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstReformedUnitedChurchofChrist/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/frucc_of_burlington_nc/

*The Lent 2021 Photo-a-Day Challenge is a social media promotion created
by the Rethink Church initiative of the United Methodist Church.*