

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

May 2024

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Community meal set for Memorial Day

On holidays throughout the year, the ACAC kitchen closes in order to give some much needed rest to its employees. To ensure that meals are still available to persons who rely upon this service, several different churches fill in for the kitchen. For at least the last 25+ years, the members of FRUCC have taken responsibility for preparing and serving meals on both Memorial Day and Labor Day.

So, if you are in town for Memorial Day (May 27), please consider helping us serve lunch for those in our community who are less fortunate. This is a wonderful opportunity for service and a great way to make new friends.

Want to help? Please contact Beverly Pugh

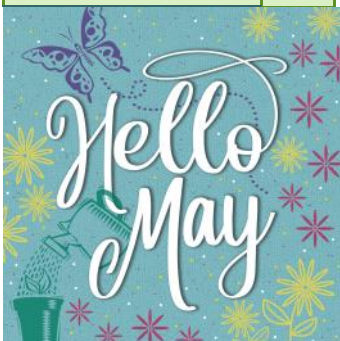
Thanks for your generosity

As a project of the Missions and Outreach Team, Tiffanie Crisafulli Jackson, Executive Director, S.A.F.E. (Southern Alamance Family Empowerment) made a presentation during worship on February 25. In support of S.A.F.E., we accepted donations during the month of March. The sanctuary altar soon held more than candles and flowers.

The collection focused on the highest need items - - peanut butter, hot breakfast cereals like oatmeal and cream of wheat, and diapers. For the homeless, we collected travel-sized soaps, shampoos, toothpaste, cream, etc. A collection box received cash and check donations.

The project ended on March 31 - Easter Sunday - with the SAFE van picking up our donations the following week. Thanks to your generosity, we loaded 96 boxes and containers of varying sizes that was delivered to the SAFE location on Highway 87 South. Cash and checks totaled \$1,080.

Our donations are shared with folks throughout Alamance County - not just southern Alamance. In fact, many of the folks being served by S.A.F.E. live in the Burlington area in close proximity to First Reformed.



Hometown Mission Trip continues in 2024

For many years, members of First Reformed UCC traveled to places like East St. Louis, Washington, DC, the mountains of North Carolina, and even out of the country to share God's love with others through acts of service. In the summer of 2017, the idea of a Hometown Mission Trip was born. With our existing connections with the Meals on Wheels program, we decided to work with the Meals on Wheels staff to complete repair and improvement tasks for their clients.

The Hometown Mission Trip work continued - even through the pandemic - on a smaller scale. In 2023, we restarted our work with a new focus. Meals on Wheels staff and food delivery volunteers keep a running list of work that needs to be done to make the delivery process safer for the volunteers. For example: A Meals on Wheels staff member reached out to First Reformed to ask if one of our volunteers could cut back the plants that had grown up around the front door almost blocking the entrance. Over three dates in 2023 (April 29, May 20, and June 10), work at twenty sites was completed.

Our 2024 Hometown Mission Trip will take place on Saturday, May 18. Prior to the actual workday, Sandi Jones will make individual phone calls to each Meals on Wheels client to determine exactly what

work needs to be done. Other members of the Mission and Outreach Team will make site visits, as needed, to get additional details. Volunteers will

gather at 8:30 a.m. on May 18 in the Fellowship Hall for directions and a blessing. Three teams of volunteers will go out to assigned locations - working from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Work teams will complete the following tasks as requested by the clients:

- Yard work (push mow small yards, trim around yard/walkways, trim shrubbery, pick up small limbs and rake areas, as needed.)
- Sweep porches, steps, and sidewalks.
- Plant flowers in existing flower pots or small landscaped areas. Flowers and soil will be provided.
- Remove debris, broken yard furniture, etc.
- Repair wooden steps (or other small repair jobs)

Volunteers are still needed for the May 18 Hometown Mission Trip. Please consider inviting family and friends to join us for this important day of sharing God's love with our community. See Bev Pugh for information and to secure a Volunteer Form.



The Morning Circle will meet Wednesday, May 1, at 11:30 a.m. at Grill 584. All are welcome!



Senior Adults

Thursday, May 23

11:30 a.m.

Cutting Board

Alamance Chorale

50th Anniversary Spring Concert

Join Alamance Chorale for our Anniversary Concert, at St Mark's Community Church, Burlington on May 21, 2024, 7:30 pm. Our program will focus on sharing the message of why singing is important to us as we share words from our Chorale members explaining "This Is Why We Sing." Former members, former directors, and accompanists will be invited to sing a selection with the Chorale and should contact Arleen Widerman at arleen-widerman@gmail.com if interested in participating. The Burlington Boys Choir will also offer a selection and join the Chorale to express our joy in singing. There is no admission for the concert. Make plans to join us for this special time of celebration.

For more information go to
www.alamancechorale.org
Or email us at alamancechorale1974@gmail.com

*This is
why we*
Sing!

OFFICE HOURS 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Tuesday - Friday

Greeters: Pam Ratchford, Amy Deal, Ray Deal
Trustee on Call: Gary Lefew

Birthdays

- 2 Fay Oakley
- 9 Julie Lefew
- 19 Larry Small
- 22 Sherry Grant
- 25 David French
- 30 Lonnie Hawkins
- 31 Don Doornheim



Don't be root-bound

As a new gardener, Jan Riggerbach used to treat bedding plants with extreme care, setting them into soil without disturbing the roots. Eventually she learned that rough — even ruthless — treatment is better in the long run.



"If the plant has been growing in its pot so long that the roots are circling the bottom, I jab my finger into the bottom of the soil and pull down to untangle the roots," Riggerbach wrote in her gardening column. "If the whole pot is filled with circling roots, I have to be merciless. I don't worry if I break some of the roots. That's better than allowing the roots to continue to circle when the plants are growing in the garden."

In the same way, it's easy to grow complacent and inward-focused in our walk with God. But bunched-up roots can't reach out for sustenance. So for maximum faith growth, dare to let God shake you up from time to time!

Meals on Wheels

Delivery Dates

May 6 - 10

Consistory Notes

The Consistory of FRUCC met on Wednesday, April 10, 2024. In addition to Grace McMullen, eight members were in attendance.

The March 2024 minutes with the needed corrections, were approved along with the March Financial reports.

Ministry Reports

Faith Formation

- Grace is scheduling meetings on the first Sunday of every other month. The group has many ideas; it is just a matter of meeting to discuss them.
- Grace plans to do a video series with Sunday School starting on April 28 (The Work of the People).
- Planning to do a book study on aging with *The Gift of the Years* by Joan Chittister

Fellowship

- We are considering an ice cream social in early June with a date TBD
- The next Breakfast will be sometime in June.
- O&A will meet at 4 p.m. on June 9.

Mission & Outreach

- Visitation ministry: made 11 visits in March
- SAFE update: 96 containers of various sizes were collected, plus cash and check donations totaling \$1,080. The items have been picked up.
- Habitat for Humanity: The 2023 Unity Build house dedication is on April 13 at 11:30 a.m. Derek and Sandi plan to attend. For the 2024 Unity Build, a blitz build is scheduled for the first two weeks of June. More details to come. There is an Endowment request of \$5,000 for this.
- Meals on Wheels/Hometown Mission Trip: The date is May 18 from 8:30 to 3:00, and there is a sign-up sheet on the Sanctuary bulletin board. Work team volunteers are needed.
- A sub-committee chaired by Susan Balog is planning a Memorial Day Community Meal.

Worship

- The needed colors for paraments are now listed on the storage box lid.
- The monthly greeters are asked to also cover for funerals and to make sure there is coverage if they are not able to attend.

Pastor's Report

- We had a wonderful Holy Week/Easter service with over 60 people in attendance on Easter
- Living and learning about logistics for Jubilee services. The content for the Jubilee service on April 7 was great; there are just some logistics issues I will try to improve next time.
- I have had a couple of leads on the Godly Play Storyteller role, but no "bites" yet. I might have to push back my timeline to find the right person.
- Helping the O&A group organize Lynn Huber's potluck event on April 25. We agreed on \$250 for the honorarium. We will request help setting up and tearing down tables.

Old Business

- Spectrum has our services running. There is an issue with Grace's desktop, but Carol advised she will get it working.
- Yoga has not paid for March and e-mails have been sent. Consistory approved increasing rent per class from \$5 to \$10. An increase notice was sent.
- Cardinal Joinery has asked for more time to explore options.
- Grant application requested more info. Derek supplied the information he had, and they acknowledged receipt.
- The King Electric quote needs to be approved. Once the congregation approves, funds will come from Copland money, which is supposed to be in the general fund.
- Ms. Covington from the Willows was invited to attend the meeting but could not do so this month. We have been playing phone tag. Consistory wants to assist with a particular need from all requests rather than a blanket donation of funds.

New Business

- Custodial increase of \$200 per month to \$1,700, and we only budgeted for \$1,500, which comes to \$20,400 annually from \$18,000. Approval of increase to be taken to the congregation. Consistory is recommending reaching out for bids for 2025 services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claudette Fitzgerald

Connection is published monthly by
First Reformed United Church of Christ.
513 West Front Street
Burlington, NC 27215
(336)226-7346
fruccoffice@gmail.com
firstreformeducc.org

Pastor	Grace McMullen
Ministry Assistant/Editor	Carol Burnett
Organist	David Ratchford
Music Coordinator/Chime Choir	Beverly Pugh

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
11:00 a.m.	Worship

All are welcome!

Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.



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- RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED -

