

THE CHRISTIAN COURIER



First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

704 Edwards Road * Greenville, SC 29615 * (864)244-1449

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April 2012

From the Pastor

I'm writing this article from a hospital waiting room – not a terribly unusual place for a pastor to be. But today it's different. Today my husband's sister is having surgery and waiting for answers to questions we are often afraid to ask out loud. I find myself wondering how I'm supposed to act. Am I allowed to be the concerned family member? Am I expected to fill the role of pastor? Is it ok to admit that I'm worried? Do I need to be strong for the sake of others? How is a minister supposed to minister to her family and herself? After a while I look up to see the familiar face of a church member. Then two more. Later another. They have come to be present. They come to wait, to visit, to be there as time passes and they help keep all of the questioning and wondering from becoming too much. There are no magic words during these difficult times. There is no perfect prayer. But there is the touch of a loving hand, the offer of a cup of coffee, the silent embrace when no words will help. Some how the people we see week after week are transformed into the face of God, the grace of God, right here in Greenville Memorial.

I don't know that any of us wakes up on a given morning and says, "Today I'm going to be an angel," or "Today I'm going to be Jesus." But it happens. It happens in the hospital, in the grocery store, at the park, even at Starbucks. Every act of kindness, every effort toward compassion, every bit of mercy brings the Kingdom of Heaven closer to fulfillment. You have that power. Will you allow it to be at work in you? I encourage you to think about it. As the soul-searching season of Lent gives way to the celebration of life in Easter, think about the ways you can touch someone else. Let just one other person know he's not alone. You don't have to say or do anything and it won't cost you a penny. Simply be there for someone else. Your very presence could make all the difference in the world.

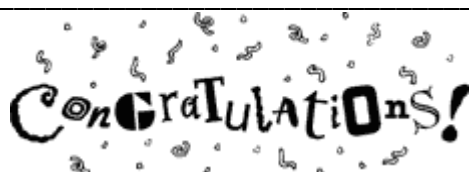
Be well,

Johnna Camp, Pastor



Welcome our new members! The Dellinger's visited with us for the first time Sunday, March 11 and decided this was the place for them.

Mark & Amanda Dellinger
1 Ellesemere Drive
Greenville, SC 29615



Our congregation has lots to celebrate...

- Tom Faulkner has been accepted into the care of the Region of North Carolina as a candidate for ordination;
- Noa Camp has been accepted into the Fine Arts Center of Greenville County;
- Leslie Tomlin was the winner of the FCC Facebook February contest, bringing the most new Friends to our Facebook page: First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Greenville, SC. Like us today!
- Judy Isler has started the third chapter of her life, as she leaves behind her position at Kilgore-Lewis House and now begins perusing a time of writing.
- Alex Mason has been accepted at Winthrop College with a full scholarship.

Be sure to share your joys and celebrations so we can publish them in the Courier.



Special Visitor

We'll welcome a very special guest to our Egg Hunt following worship on **April 8**: the EASTER BUNNY. Children of all ages are invited to have a keepsake photo made with the Easter Bunny, which they can take home that day. What a great way to remember a special service with family and friends along with the joy of an egg hunt on the grounds.

Lunch and Learn

Our April "Lunch and Learn" is on **April 18** and includes a field trip. We'll be visiting The Woodlands at Furman (www.thewoodlandsatfurman.org) for lunch, a presentation and tour, and a visit with our very own Mary Kay Humphress. The lunch is free but reservations are necessary. Please contact the Church Office: (864) 244-1449 or email: fccdociingreen@yahoo.org to make your reservation by April 11. When you make your reservation, let us know if you'd like to carpool. A group will leave the church at 11:30 on April 18th.



Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, April 1st and will be filled with opportunities for worship and reflection. After processing into the sanctuary with Palms on Sunday, we will participate in a very dramatic Maundy Thursday service, "The Cry of the Whole Congregation." Good Friday and Holy Saturday we will join in a 24-hour prayer vigil, leading us to the celebration of Easter on April 8. Aldersgate United Methodist will serve as the host for this year's Easter Sunrise service at 7:00am with Tom Faulkner preaching. The service will be followed by breakfast at Aldersgate and our normal FCC schedule. After the 11:00 service there will be an Easter Egg Hunt with a very special guest – the Easter Bunny. Children will have a chance to have their picture taken with the Easter Bunny and can take the picture home that day.

Plan to be a part of as many of these services as you can. And remember this is a great opportunity to invite family and friends who aren't already a part of a faith community.

**Easter Lilies are on sale
March 25- April 1. \$ 8.00 each**



Wednesday Night Live

You've no doubt heard of the "not ready for primetime players" of Saturday Night Live. Come join your church family for Wednesday Night Live on Wednesdays from **April 18-May 23**. Each evening will begin with supper at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall followed by classes and activities for all ages from 6:15-7:30. Offerings for adults include a class on the letter to the Ephesians led by Sharon Smith, the practice of Centering Prayer offered by Tom Faulkner, a discussion of "Abraham: One God, Three Wives, Five Religions," by Frances Worthington led by Richard Hanks, and a DVD discussion group called Living the Questions facilitated by Pastor Johnna. More information about these offerings is available in the Gathering Space along with sign-up sheets for each group and for dinner. Please help us in our planning by signing up no later than April 15. If you have questions, please call the church office.



A Jewish
Cultural *Music* **FOOD** Art **DANCING**
Festival

Sunday, April 15, 2012 10 am to 4 pm
Temple of Israel Campus, 400 Spring Forest Rd. www.shalomfestsc.org



Greenville Drive Ball Game

Mark your calendars for **April 20** to attend the Greenville Drive ballgame. Hotdogs, popcorn ... yummm! More info as we get closer to the date. If you have ideas for the enrichment of the membership of our congregation, please see Ron Logan, Lisa Strunk, or Leslie Tomlin.

Youth Sunday

On **April 22** our worship service will be led by the Youth of our congregation. Come and be spiritually fed through preaching, prayers, music, and communion – all presided over and offered by the members of our Worship and Wonder group, the Teachings of Jesus class, and the Christian Youth Fellowship. You don't want to miss this special day!

Regional Assembly

"That All May Be One" is the theme of the 164th Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in NC to be held **April 27-29** in Raleigh. Delegates from FCC are: Maxine Camp, Paul Guy, and Tom Faulkner. Pastor Johnna, Bryant, Noa, Malachi, and Ethan will also attend. If you plan to participate in the Assembly and have not registered please do so ASAP. For more information see the Disciples Events bulletin board in the hallway near the Church Office.



Spiritual Retreat

Pastor Johnna will be on spiritual retreat **April 9-13**. She will be at Mepkin Abbey (<http://mepkinabbey.org/wordpress/>) enjoying a week of silence, reflection, and renewal. She will be unavailable via phone or email. If you need pastoral care or assistance please contact the church office: (864) 244-1449; Associate Minister, Tom Faulkner: (864) 430-3023; or the chair of the elders, Denny Camp: (864) 506-6361.

Ministry Teams

Communications Ministry Team

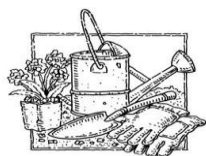
The Communications Team is planning to produce a new cookbook. If you have a recipe that is a "family favorite", or one that people are always asking you for, we want it for the cookbook! Also, we would love to have some recipes from family members who have passed on. This is a great memorial for a beloved member who is no longer with us. In conjunction with this, we are holding a contest to "Name the Cookbook". It has been suggested that we use the name of the old cookbook "Burnt Offerings" but maybe someone can come up with a even better name. The deadline for submitting recipes is April 1st as we plan to have the cookbook ready for Mother's Day gift giving! Recipes can be mailed to Pat Hudson-Barrs, 107 Colvin Road, Greenville, SC 29615 or emailed HUDSONBARRS@AOL.COM or just hand it to Pat, Leslie Tomlin or Judy Isler at church on Sundays.



Membership Ministry Team

We welcomed **Michael and Amanda Dellinger** into our fellowship. We know they will be a great asset for First Christian.

Also **Hank Premont**, (who joined Feb. 5), has already shown his enthusiasm by his involvement in many areas.



Community Garden

Community Garden

There are lots of activity as we get closer to growing season.

The big news is that we will grow to 17 12'x4' raised beds this year (thanks to the leadership of Dan Hammond) and all of them are spoken for. We have truly attracted community interest and will be the venue for Gardening For Good organic gardening workshop from 9:00 - 12:00 on **March 31**. The cost is \$10 for this workshop led by Greenville's Master Gardeners followed by a catered lunch. Please register for this event online at: **www.communitygarden101.eventbrite.com**

Rain date is planned for April 14, 2012

Then we'll focus on participation in this year's Urban Farm Tour on **May 12** when we will be one of the sites for this important event. Check out: www.GreenvilleUFT.com where some of our cutest gardeners are shown. Just scroll down "Tour Sites" until you get to First Christian Church.

Worship Ministry Team

The Lord's Prayer

For several weeks the FCC Worship Team has been discussing the Lord's Prayer that we use in our services and have debated the use of "debts" and "debtors" verses "trespasses" or "sins". Even though debts and debtors have been used for many years in this church and many other DOC congregations, there is no set guideline within DOC on which terminology to use. Some of us come from DOC congregations that have used trespasses and some have used sins. Johnna's sermon on March 18 touched on the variations in use of these terms and the Biblical background. We have also received input from a few in the church about their preferences. After further debate within the Worship Team, we concluded that "sins" and "sinners" better defines the what and why that we are asking forgiveness and agreed to start using these terms in our service on April 15.



Holy Week



The Giving Tree

Items collected under the Giving Tree (in the Gathering Space) during the month of April will be donated to United Ministries. This month we are asking each family to provide canned vegetables; corn, any beans, carrots, etc, for the UM Food Pantry. To learn more about services provided by United Ministries visit their website: www.united-ministries.org



DW/CWF NEWS

The next meeting is Tuesday, April 3. During the meeting we will be stuffing Easter Eggs.

**Delores Respess, Leah Ehlers,
Pat Daughtry – Co-Presidents**



DM/CMF NEWS

- The next meeting will be Wednesday, **April 10** beginning with dinner at 6:30pm.
- Men's work day will be Saturday, **April 14**.
- DM will host Ronald McDonald house meal on Tues., **April 17**.

History in the Making: Seeing the Unseen
by Judy Isler, church Historian

There are people in this church who know how to work magic, and their best “trick” is making themselves invisible!

They tend to our property and church family because they love our Lord and our congregation. They don’t announce their accomplishments and don’t expect anyone else to do so, either. In fact, when the truth of the good they have accomplished becomes known, they are pleased that their efforts are appreciated, but they are also embarrassed to be pointed out as “special”.

They find their joy in being “taken for granted” by the rest of us, making it seem that things run so smoothly here on some sort of automatic pilot. They are so good at being invisible that I know I’m going to leave someone off this list, but here are a few of the “invisible folks” I want to thank for doing their very special magic at First Christian Church:

Delores Respass is a master organizer of special meals and women’s projects. Don’t look for her at the table when there’s a church dinner: she’ll be serving during the meal and cleaning up afterwards!
Leah and Leroy Ehlers were concerned about the stability and appearance of the chairs in our sanctuary. So, they sneaked a few home each week, Leroy rebuilt the frames and reinforced the cushion of seat while Leah cleaned the fabric seats. Because of them, we are truly “sitting pretty” every Sunday!

Denny Camp and Tim Taylor make “little projects” their specialty. They look for what they consider “small fix-it jobs” and just do them. Personally, I think building long-needed stairs to our storage area and giving our outside chalice sign three coats of oil-based gel paint (that stuff takes 24 hours for one coat to dry) are not really that “little”, but I’m glad Denny and Tim do!

Mardi Smith loves nature so much that she has taken the time to build and install two (third is coming) blue birds houses on our property.

Pat Hudson-Barr learned a lot from her mom, Ruth Lock, and she’s added her own quiet polish to sharing talents as a cook (including work on a new edition of our cookbook) and wisdom as a woman of faith to our congregation. She really “tunes in” to other people!

Pat Daughtry pretends that providing the music for our worship services, from selecting music to playing both piano and organ to leading our choir are simple, once-a-week tasks. Of course, that’s not the case. Choir members know that just selecting music that our little bunch of fervent amateurs can perform and teaching it to us so we sound good is a major undertaking! In addition, Pat mentors young people with an interest in music, giving them encouragement and opportunity to use their talents as part of their worship.

Gary Aten whose drawing of our building makes our weekly bulletins so beautiful, also made the coffee mug peg board for the Fellowship Hall.

Rev. Dr. George Mullins has a talent with wood. Several wooden figures have been crafted from his hands. Recently George has built a base for the “communication stand” that is between the office and Pastor’s Study. The broken hymn holders that fit on the sides of the chairs in the sanctuary have been given a new life from the hands of George.

This is just the beginning of our list of “inspired invisibles”. I need YOUR help to identify others. Please take a moment to drop me a note (Historian’s basket in the office) so I can bring some more of our faithful workers the recognition they deserve.

Communication – Information

In order to keep clear and consistent communication going within our faith community, each set of approved minutes (Board, Cabinet, etc.) will be distributed electronically to all and a hard copy available in a notebook placed in the Gathering Space.

April Prayer Focus – Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention

The month of April is designated as Child Abuse Prevention month. Here are some facts re: this issue in South Carolina:

- 21,000 reports a year for suspected child abuse and neglect are made to DSS & Law Enforcement
- 1 out of 3 reports a year are indicated for abuse &/or neglect
- In each indicated case of child abuse and neglect, more than 2 child victims are involved
- 1 out of 1100 child victims of abuse &/or neglect dies
- 1 out of 80 children ages 0 – 16 is a victim of child abuse and neglect
- Asthma is the only chronic childhood illness more prevalent than child abuse & neglect!

Children are at risk for abuse and neglect, if you have reason to suspect a child’s well-being is in danger, please notify the county Department of Social Services &/or Law Enforcement in your area.

Prayer: Loving God, we lift up our children, their parents & other caregivers to you; may your loving guidance and care keep them safe from harm. Help us to be mindful of their needs by providing love and understanding to them. We give thanks to you, in your name we pray, Amen.

Keeping Hope Afloat!

Spring brings forth new life, increased energy and more daylight hours! For many people, spring is a “happy time,” yet this is not the case for everyone. The challenges of life do not disappear with spring time! For persons who are battling personal challenges, it can be difficult to be around people who are “on top of the world” when they are feeling at the “bottom of their world.”

However, emotions are contagious, so those of you who are experiencing the “high” of spring, let’s see how this can be passed on! We have people in our church family who are experiencing their first spring without their loved one, who are facing health issues, relationship discord &/or financial concerns. In addition, our communities are also facing similar challenges. We cannot personally, “fix” the hurts/challenges of others. Yet, we can provide encourage and hope to others by . . . listening to their challenges, validating their challenges, offering solutions/resources and conveying a belief in their ability to meet the challenges.

May we all find ways to enjoy the opportunities and challenges that we are presented with this spring season. I think we have already been given the gift of “early pollen” and “summertime heat!” May your hope keep afloat!

Jeri Ross-Hayes, Board Chair

FROM OUR ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF OUTREACH

Ministry to the Homeless

A number of us had the privilege a week ago to support the ministry for the homeless known as Greenville Area Interfaith Housing Network (GAIHN). Those of us who have participated in the ministry are aware of the fact that churches volunteer to take turns temporarily providing a portion of their facilities to be used as temporary housing for homeless families in Greenville County. Most people do not realize that GAIHN also owns in cooperation with a number of churches 32 houses that they rent to formerly homeless families until they have enough income to move into their own home or apartment. Charles Gardner, a former Director of Community Development for the City of Greenville, recently visited First Christian Church to talk about the importance of seeking and celebrating diversity in those we meet. Charles grew up in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Greenville, the Viola Street community. He has always believed that if a child has the opportunity to live in a safe, decent, sanitary, affordable home, that child’s life will typically change for the better. No longer confronted with cracking paint, little heat, inadequate toilets, leaking roofs, or worse, no home at all, a child with a decent home finally has a place where he can experience peace, where he finally has a place to which he can bring his school friends for social interaction and play. I want to thank all the volunteers who helped with the GAIHN ministry. I hope the church can find other ways to improve the quality of life for families by providing families a decent, affordable place to stay.

SUMMARY OF CHURCH FINANCES

Report as of 03/18/12

GENERAL FUND		YTD
	Income	\$ 25,278.32
	Expenses	\$ 26,245.87
	Net Income	\$ (967.55)

SPECIAL REPORTS

Week of Compassion from all sources		\$1,005.00
Elders for April - Jeri Ross-Hayes – Presiding, Heather Yates – Serving, Denny Camp – Visiting		
Deacons for April – Mardi Smith – Prepare, Mardi Smith, Nick Buerge, Malachi Camp, Ray Cox – Serve		
April 1 – Palm Sunday – Lay Reader – Leslie Tomlin	April 15 – Lay Reader – Maxine Camp	
Children’s Moment – Heather Yates	Children’s Moment – Denny Camp	
Linger Longer - OPEN	Linger Longer - Robin Stevens	
April 8 - Easter Sunday – Lay Reader – Richard Hanks	April 22 – Lay Reader – Jeri Ross-Hayes	
Children’s Moment – Heather Yates	Children’s Moment – Elle Hanks	
Linger Longer - Finger Foods	Linger Longer - Hank Premont	
April 29 – Lay Reader – Leslie Tomlin , Children’s Moment - OPEN ,		