

**First Congregational UCC
Ministry Team - Staff
Plans & Proposals**

March 9, 2023

STAFF

Administrative Coordinator – Kathleen Stigmon
Music Director – Chuck Taft
Youth Ministry Coordinator – Andrew Hoots
Building & Grounds Manager – Doug Williams

MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS

Benevolence Team – Peggy Grant
Deacons – Jim Canty
Faith Formation – Kathleen Stigmon (acting)
Health Advisory Team – Kay Garner, Danna Park, Mary Hawkins
Hospitality Team – Dennis McLain
Laundry Love – Joanne Roudebush
Membership Team – Lorain Tuenge
Music – Chuck Taft
Racial Justice Team – Alice Martin-Adkins
Sacred Pause – Eric Lyons
Stir the Soul Café Ministries – Loraine Tuenge
Worship Team – Bev Reddick
Youth – Andrew Hoots

Ministry Team Report – 3/10/23

Staff

Admin **Kathleen Stigmon**

One Great Hour of Sharing special mission offering takes place now through 3/26/23. I will be on vacation during the week after Easter (4/11-4/18). Coverage for the office will be Linda Burke, Eric Lyons and Jim Canty. Info will be in newsletter. Review of wedding guide, instructions, marketing and agreement being reviewed/updated for discussion with Building & Grounds.

Youth **Andrew Hoots**

The newly formed Children and Youth Council met on February 12th to begin planning for future months. Here are the major upcoming events for FCUCC children and youth:

April 9th (Easter)—FCUCC will host an Easter egg hunt for our youngest children. The egg hunt will take place during the morning worship service.

June 3rd—In the Fall, the youth participates in a CluedUp Game in downtown Asheville following the Alice in Wonderland story. CluedUp is an interactive game using an app that they students have to download, to run/walk around downtown and interacting with characters from the story. On June 3rd, our students will have another opportunity to play a CluedUp Game in downtown following the story of Beauty and the Beast.

June 4th—I am planning a graduate recognition service to take place during worship. This will be the first time we have had graduates in the time that I have been serving as the youth minister at FCUCC. Right now, my plan is to allow each of our graduates a chance to speak during the service, and to then offer both graduates a small congratulatory gift from our congregation. Following the service, the congregation will have a potluck luncheon to celebrate our graduates. Parents of the graduates will put together a PowerPoint presentation of their graduate for me to present at the end of our gathering. In my previous churches, this has been an excellent and fun way for congregations to get to know the students better before the students head to college in the Fall.

Music **Chuck Taft**

In the coming months, the Choir will continue to learn and share a diverse array of Anthems (and offerings) as part of Worship. With the culmination of Lent and the Holy Week following, we are preparing music to include Handbells, Dance, Organ & Piano as well as guest instrumentalist. Eric and I continue shaping our musical offering for Good Friday to include music from Handel's MESSIAH, Spirituals, and other genre's befitting the day with guest artist joining to be part of the narrative. Planning is also underway to invite young and upcoming artist that gather from all over the country to be a part of the Brevard Music Festival. Eric will again reach out and coordinate with these fine singers to share as a part of our Worship over the summer months.

Building & Grounds Doug Williams

The following needs to be addressed by Building & Grounds:

1. Completion of choir area in the Sanctuary
2. Hood Suppression Test in Kitchen
3. Annual Backflow test for the City
4. Workdays to be scheduled to address Grounds -
Pollinator Garden
Garden beside handicap entrance sidewalk
5. Continued organization and cleaning up around the church.
6. Completing operation of security cameras.

Ministry Teams

Benevolence Team(Peggy Grant, Beaver Wyatt, Kathleen Busby, Margaret Perkins, Linda Burke)

Peggy Grant:

The Benevolence team met on 2/22/23. We discussed a theme for the year which is: "Being a Good Neighbor" as an extension from last year. We decided to make a donation of \$500 to Sunrise Community for Recovery and Wellness in the month of March. Mark Palinski from Sunrise will give a brief presentation during worship on March 19. We are also receiving donations (for Sunrise) of coffee and snacks from the congregation during the service.

For April Benevolence will highlight Aura Home Women Vets. Founder Alyce Knaflich will give a brief presentation on April 23 during worship. Also during that Sunday service we are intending to offer volunteer opportunities for Aura Home to the congregation.

Deacons (Jim Canty, Sandy Clark, Nancy Kniffin, John Mercer, Margaret Perkins, Diane Reid, Ann Marie Woffindin)

Jim Canty:

Our last meeting February 9th we met in person at the church to completed our work on the update to our policy, and website showing the same information.

Our next meeting March 9th will be on Zoom. I'll send out the completed policy for final approval with the group I've spoken with Rollin Russell about his experience on a Deacon Retreat, no date set at this time. I'll also talk with other ministers in our church on how to put together our retreat. We will discuss this in our meeting.

Faith Formation/Exploration (Eric Lyons, Loraine Tuenge)

Eric Lyons

Sacred Pause – Meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 2:00-3:15p, Fall through Spring. The group is participant-led, so topics may vary. Typically, we explore spiritual nurture through reflection and creative activities.

Devotional Writing – Our Lenten writing and art program continues through Easter Sunday, April 9th.

Gay Men's Group – Meets every 4th Sunday at 5:00-7:00 with these upcoming events:

Mar. 26 - guest speaker on transgender;

Apr. 23 - guest speaker on Native American "Two-Spirit" archetype

May 28 - cookout (off site)

Stir the Soul Café Ministries (Loraine Tuenge, Jane Stoffer)

Loraine Tuenge

Now that we are all on a good healthy plateau, we have been able to complete the rest of 2023 schedule:

We began 2023 with a Winter Meditation for at-home use. Presently a Lenten study on PAUSE & PRACTICE is in use. Additional at-home meditations will be offered for summer and fall.

Two continuing book studies reflecting on Indigenous spirituality and our relationship with creation are being offered in Wise Winter Women (Braiding Sweetgrass) and in Creative Age-ing (Refugia Faith).

Planning for our Fall retreat with the women at First Christian Church will begin soon. Am looking forward to meeting together again for Second Christmas (Celtic custom) and our winter retreat next January.

A continuing part of STSCM is the overseeing of the Library and working with the archives when there is time. This duty is part of the Membership Team, but as there is only one on that team, we are helping out.

Sunday School classes (Submitted by Kathleen Stigmon)

The Faith Formation/Exploration classes 5-week series will run through Palm Sunday, April 2nd. The sessions are led by David Ourisman and explore the four gospels and the distinct portraits of Jesus that emerge from them. Links to David's slides are being provided.

Mar 5 Gospel of Mark

Mar 12 Luke - Acts

Mar 19 Gospel of Matthew

Mar 26 Gospel of John

Apr 2 Making Sense of the Diverse Gospels (and a bonus look at 2 apocryphal gospels).

Book Discussion-Ron Martin-Adkins is leading a 5 week book discussion on Huston Smith's "Why Religion Matters: The Fate of the Human Spirit in an Age of Disbelief through April 13th.

Health Advisory Team (HAT) (Kay Garner, Danna Park, Mary Hawkins)

Kay Garner:

After a successful showing of the documentary *The Ants & The Grasshopper*, we think there is some interest in pursuing a four-part Faith Formation class with the study guide provided by *Blessed Tomorrow*, a program of *ecoAmerica*.

We think another movie on the topic of human and climate health would be of interest to the congregation but we have no immediate plans.

Hospitality Team (Dennis McLain, David Turner, Lynn Lewis)

Dennis McLain:

We are providing beverages and dessert for the Transition Team congregational meeting regarding the recent FCUCC survey. We will be organizing an Easter breakfast at 9am on Easter Sunday. Order forms for the annual Easter flower purchases in memory of or in honor of a loved one will be included in the 3/19 bulletin and due by 4/2 (Palm Sunday). We plan to donate any flowers that are not claimed on Easter to bring to people who are home bound or in a nursing home.

Membership Team (Lorraine Tuenge)

Lorraine Tuenge:

Goals for the rest of this year:

- Receptions of New Members with classes to be scheduled for April/May, and Sept/Oct.
- Ministry Fair for September to educate and recruit.
- Workers for Archives – 2024 is 110th Anniversary –celebrate our benevolence and mission work?
- Plan for a Congregational Retreat or Mini-Retreat for late summer in 2023
- Continue working with Hospitality on Thanksgiving Dinner, Christmas Dinner
- Set up Alternative Christmas Show – it was suggested by several team leaders that this program be offered on Dec 3 and the Christmas Dinner on Dec. 17

Laundry Love (Joanne Roudebush, Linda Burke, Andrew Hoots)

Joanne Roudebush:

“...On February 26th, we served 31 clients and spent \$400 on ~100 loads of laundry. The congregation’s generous support is appreciated and needed each month. We also need regular volunteers to help at the laundry and to provide transportation.”

The above information published in the March 3rd newsletter has created more donations and conversations about volunteers. The new laundromat owner approached us expressing support for our ministry. He pledged \$100 per month to help with expenses. The leadership team is discussing how we can better schedule the service to avoid late endings to the day.

Music Ministry (Chuck Taft, Eric Fricke, Betty Dillashaw)

See Music Update in the Staff Section

Racial Justice Team (Alice Martin-Adkins, Bonnie Schell, Bev Reddick, Donna Miller, Horace Hunt, Sandy Clark, Penny Silverman, Dorri Sherrill and Peggy Grant)

Alice Martin-Adkins:

The Racial Justice Team led 4 Faith Formation classes in January and February and encouraged members of the congregation to take advantage of many community offerings during Black History Month. Though we will have more discussion at our March 9 meeting here are some of the ideas for the future:

Continuing to work on the Land Acknowledgement Statement - We will want to share that with the Board at some point in the near future.

Considering a visit to the Mars Hill Anderson Rosenwald School (with a visit to Beaver's family home place perhaps?)

Looking at possible future Faith Formation classes including more discussion with HAT about "The Ants and The Grasshopper"

Alice is proposing to teach a Saturday morning class after Easter on "My Grandmother's Hands" - a study on racialized trauma and mending our hearts and bodies.

We are considering a project with the Women's prison - to learn more about the fees incarcerated women must pay before release and how to help them.

Looking forward to an in-person meeting in April and a time to invite others to join us.

Work continues on a Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Worship Team (Bev Reddick, Dennis McLain, Sandy Clark, Chuck Taft)

Bev Reddick:

The worship team continues planning for the remainder of Lent.

The March 26th service and Congregational Gathering will be led by Executive Directors of the UCC Southern Conference. Dr. Davis, and the WNC Association, Rev. Casiday. The Processional for **Palm Sunday 4/2** will include the Bells and Dancers. On **Maundy Thursday (4/6) at 6 PM** there will be provided light supper of soup and bread followed by Communion around the tables. Members from the First Christian Church, who originally owned our building, will be joining us. On **Good Friday at noon** there will be a service of music planned by Chuck and Eric. The **Easter** Potluck Breakfast will be at 9AM and an Easter Egg Hunt will happen following the service. People are being invited to purchase flowers for the sanctuary and to bring flowers to put on a cross, which will be out front of the church.

There has been excellent Liturgists participation first quarter and the second quarter list has been sent to volunteers. The Dance Circle is reorganizing leadership responsibilities since Smitty Dotson Smith left. Planning underway for Palm Sunday 4/2 processional with all interested children, youth and adults.