

*Our Vision is to be Christ to each other
and our community— doing
justice, loving mercy and
walking humbly with our God.*

BOOK CLUB

The Book Group will be studying *THE COLOR OF MONEY* by Mehrsa Baradaran beginning February 6. This will include a live stream talk by the author on Feb. 20 at 7pm in the Dining Room. This will be led by Nancy Easler and Matt Johnson. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone to come and join our group. We would love to grow in number. We meet on 10:30 AM on Thursday in the Brides Room.

Coat & Blanket Giveaway is this coming Sunday, January 26 - 2pm-3pm



Salt Shakers

Deadline to sign-up is this coming Sunday, January 26.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the concourse, or contact, Sabrina Myers at 864-621-3610 or email at zoo@charter.net. Singles may sign-up as singles or as a pair. Please let me know if you are willing to host one month. You are not required to do so for your participation.

Thank you all. I think you will enjoy the time, meeting with and enjoying other's company.

Sabrina Myers

Choir NEWS...

On **Sunday, February 9th**, we will be celebrating Baptist Women in Ministry. In the spirit of the theme, we will have an all-women's choir that day, and all the ladies of the church are welcome to join us. The women's choir will be singing a lovely arrangement of the well-known hymn Beautiful Savior, and they will rehearse it during our regular choir rehearsals on Wednesday evening at 7:00.

While you would not have to come to all between now and then, it would be most helpful if you attended at least the rehearsal on Feb. 5th. This would give you an opportunity to be prepared with the music as well as secure a robe to wear on the 9th. If you have been considering singing in the choir, this would be an excellent time to give it a try...we would love to have you! Gentlemen, you will have an opportunity to join the choir for a special Men's Day later in the year. Stay tuned for details.



From the Pastor's Desk

The last two weeks I have been preaching on our taking some “next steps” in the areas of worship and belonging. Reflecting on those issues has brought back to the fore for me the reality that our sanctuary is really big, but our congregation (for now) is not. That means that we sit scattered all over the

sanctuary, far apart from each other. This is not conducive to creating a worshipful environment, nor does it build a sense of belonging among those who are in attendance.

Studies show that a room that is 80% full will feel “full” to someone who comes in. Conversely, a room that is only 20% full will feel empty. The fire marshal says our sanctuary seats 486 people. That means we would need almost 100 people on average for the room to not feel empty. Currently, our average attendance is about 80. So, a guest coming to worship with us for the first time will look at the room and say, “There’s no one here.”

To address that problem, we need to shrink our available seating for now. I suggested to our deacons that we close off the section of pews closest to the baptismal (on the right side of the sanctuary if you are looking out from the stage). They readily agreed that this was what we should do.

Sunday, I spoke to several of you who regularly sit in that section. I plan on having conversations with a few more. I know that a favored seat is important. Sometimes we sit in the same place for years. But I also hope we can all see that being closer together while we worship, and presenting a sanctuary that doesn’t feel empty to new guests, are important goals that transcend even our seating preferences.

My plan is to have that section roped off beginning the first Sunday of February. If you would like to talk about this further, I’m always available for a conversation. I look forward to the day when our congregation has grown to the size where opening that section back up will be something we can celebrate together. Thank you for your willingness to do whatever we need to do to create a community of belonging for everyone.

Matt

On the evening of Tuesday, January 14, the Ministry Council had a very productive meeting. We scheduled many events and church activities on the 2020 calendar and clarified procedures for Quarterly Luncheons and future celebrations.

With the guidance of Pastor Matt, we began envisioning how our ministry council and teams might realign to more effectively live out our church’s core functions of worship, belonging, serving and investing.



A special thank you to Barbara Jean and Lloyd Callaway for spearheading the planning and implementation of the January 12 Quarterly Luncheon. The work of the Alma Hudson class members, congregational care and stewardship teams, as well as the many volunteers who stepped in to set up and clean-up, is very much appreciated. The Soup & Sandwich luncheon was delicious and highly enjoyable!!

Deacons Bench

Four Special Committees have been appointed by the Deacons to work on short term projects. Jack Todd is leading a committee to improve our security systems and procedures. That committee consists of Jack, Jean Pruett, and Foster McLane.

Kathy Hensley is leading a committee to separate out what should be considered as Constitution from basic Church/Committee Procedures. This committee consists of Kathy, Wendy Case, and Gerald Keown.

Lee Anne Bailie is leading a team to review the safety and future of our playground. This team consists of Lee Anne, Linda Raines, and Foster McLane. They are working in conjunction with the Building and Grounds Committee. The playground has been locked to prevent any accidents from unsupervised play among our children or the children in the community.

The last committee, lead by our Pastor, is the Growing Young Committee. This committee consists of Matt Johnson, Lonnie Myers, and Lee Anne Bailie. They will be part of a cohort of CBF Churches from SC, NC, and Ga. The cohort consists of two in person summits in Rock Hill, SC, regular on-line webinars, one year of personalized coaching, including support for developing strategy for change, and access to the church-wide version of the Growing Young Assessment. The Growing Young Cohort begins work in February. We will have periodic updates from this group.

From a financial standpoint we are in better shape than we have been in several years, but we also have a list of maintenance issues that are needed in our aging building. Therefore, the B&G committee will be meeting with the Finance Committee to get quotes and prioritize these needs. We will keep you posted on these priorities.

Wendy Case
Deacon Chair

Youth Sunday School Room—

The Youth Sunday School room has finally been cleaned out and set up in Room 224 at the end of the Adult Sunday School hall. However, in an effort to make the room a little more appealing to young people, we have some areas of need that we would like to share with our Fernwood family. This is our YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL WISHLIST. If you have any of these items and would like to donate to the cause, please drop your items off in the Communications Office (across from the main church office). If you need assistance with bringing your items into the church, contact Lee Anne Bailie (864-415-1480) or [email](#) so pick-up can be arranged.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL WISHLIST

Floor Lamps
Table lamps
Bean Bag Chairs
Saucer Chairs
An artificial tree (ficus or palm)
A mini-fridge
A couple of surge protectors
(even better with USB charging ports)

From the Fernwood Kids...

The Fernwood Kids would like to thank everyone who helped us with our Mosaic Art project. It was fun to see the image become more and more apparent each week. It made us so excited to walk by and see that adults had added stickers to the poster. The poster is going to be hung permanently on the wall in the Children's Hall lobby area (where other children's art is on display).

Fernwood Baptist Church
200 Fernwood Drive
Spartanburg, SC 29307

OFFICE HOURS

Mon – Thurs: 8:30am to 4:30pm
Please call ahead for availability.
(864) 582-7467

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STAFF

Suzanne Wynn Brown

Director of Music Ministries – 864-316-6943

Suzanne@fernwoodchurch.org

Rev. Matt Johnson

Senior Pastor – 502-974-4480

Matt@fernwoodchurch.org

Angie M. Quinn

Administrative Assistant – 864-978-7404

Angie@fernwoodchurch.org

Mary Helen Wessinger

Financial Administrator

Maryhelen@fernwoodchurch.org

Uplift Outreach Center News...

The Uplift Outreach Center is working on a Valentine's project and need shoe boxes. Please bring them to the church and leave outside the office door near the collection for Total Ministries. Thanks for your help in this matter.

A Thank You Note...

The HARRISES are very grateful for all of your acts of love over the past months. Following Marcia's knee surgery and the death of Mason's brother, you have called, sent cards, brought food and visited to show that you care. We belong to a wonderful family at Fernwood and your expressions of support will long be remembered.

Thank you. *Mason and Marcia Harris*

Publication Notice

The next bi-weekly e-blast newsletter publication will be **Wednesday, January 22, 2020**. Deadline for all articles is **Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at Noon**.

PLEASE NOTE: You may submit your information via email (angie@fernwoodchurch.org) or through the church office. Please do not submit any information over the phone. Information submitted after the deadline will not be published until the following issue (no exceptions). Thank you for your understanding!