

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

Staff Love Gift

Each year in December, we show our love to our staff by a special gift.

This year has been a very difficult year for all of us so let's combine our resources to express our appreciation of our staff at Fernwood.

Would you consider a "Love Offering" to our staff?

You may contribute via any of the following ways:

- Online - select Staff Love Gift
- Check - just put Staff Love Gift in the memo line on the check and either mail it to the church or bring it by the office.

All funds must be in the **office by December 21**, so you should **mail your checks** not later than **Friday, December 18** or complete your **on-line contribution by December 20**.

Thank you for being the caring people that you are.

Personnel Committee



A Letter from Suzanne...

Dear Amazing, Loving, Supportive Church Family~

It is with sadness for me personally, but with great hope for Fernwood's future, that I resign my position as Music Director. The decision has nothing to do with any updated diagnosis or the way I'm feeling at this moment. I simply don't have the energy required to move into the future with this position, and it isn't fair to you all to hope that I will.

I'd like to shout from the rooftop my admiration and appreciation for Dr. Stafford Turner who stepped in at literally a moment's notice over a year ago and has carried on with great care, creativity, and innovation in this COVID age.

I hope you all know how much our Family loves each one of you and how I have treasured this job. Thank you for trusting me with our church music ministry. My fondest hope is that we are all together again soon making music in our beautiful Sanctuary!

With Love & Prayers~

Suzanne Brown

From the Pastor's Desk

I know Thanksgiving was last week, but I wanted to take some time today to offer my thanks to you. These last few months have been a strain on our family in several ways. In addition to general pandemic stress and homeschooling woes, Mac had a bike accident. He fell off his bike and landed on his face. He needed stitches in his chin, chipped five teeth, and broke off one of his front teeth. It was a scary time for him and us. Your cards and well wishes (especially the gift cards to get ice cream!) meant so much to him and to his parents. By the way, he is well on the mend, with no stitches in his chin anymore and a new front tooth!

Then, our refrigerator went out, which led to the discovery of a water leak behind the fridge, which led to our whole kitchen floor being ripped out (including an asbestos abatement). Currently, our kitchen floor is bare boards and all of our kitchen appliances have taken up temporary residence in other rooms in the house. Again, so many of you brought food and sent gift cards. We are deeply grateful for your thoughtfulness and care.

The way you have responded to our recent issues is consistent to the church you have been since before we even arrived in Spartanburg. You are always thoughtful, loving, and full of grace. It's how you have handled our time apart during the pandemic is well. I don't know what else to say but thank you for being you.

By the way, don't forget to come to the church building this Sunday from 1-2PM for a drive by communion. I will be out front in my mask, ready to serve and see you safely!

Matt



Christmas Eve Worship Gift Pick Up

December 16, 4:00-6:00 pm

Drive Thru E. F. L. C.

Fernwood's Cozy Christmas Eve

Fernwood's Christmas Eve would not be complete without a candle lighting! The Worship Ministry Team, with Matt's creativity, have put together a "warm and cozy" Christmas Eve worship service in which we can all light candles "together"! (Well, at least light them all at the same time!)

Christmas Eve Worship Gift Bags have been made for each family. Each bag contains candles for you to light and some other Christmas goodies. Please come by on December 16th to pick yours up. Or, you can make special arrangements with the church office. Thank you to all who had a part in making 2020's Christmas Eve Worship the coziest ever for our Fernwood family!

Christmas Eve Worship Gift Pick Up, December 16, 4:00-6:00 pm
Drive Thru E. F. L. C. (covered entrance at the back of the church)

Homebound Member of the Week

Margaret McDowell

c/o Ray McDowell, 1152 Ringgold Depot Road, Ringgold, VA 24586

Coat Drive

Fernwood will be hosting a coat donation again this year; due to Covid it will be managed differently. We will be collecting coats at the church until **Friday, December 11.**

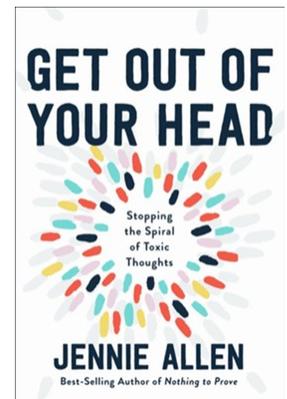


Contact Angie to coordinate when you can drop them off. If you need someone to come pick up coats at your house, please contact Penny Ginn.

Coats will then be given to Regenesys or another Spartanburg-area ministry to be distributed to those in need. In addition to coats, we will collect hats, scarves and gloves.

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

In the new year, the Discipleship ministry team will be offering a video-based, online Bible study led by Lee Anne Bailie. This hybrid study will combine Zoom sessions, Facebook small group interactions, and an outdoor excursion. This six session study, *Get Out of Your Head* by Jennie Allen, is a timely focus on fixing our eyes on God and his work during this age of anxiety and hopelessness. Please go to <https://www.smores.com/8uj7x> to read more about this incredible study and find out about materials, etc. Zoom sessions will be held on Wednesday nights beginning January 13 at 7:30pm. Open to all adults. Please share with your friends. Register at <https://forms.gle/JdB3sB8WwKcTRASp7>



The Choral Corner

Last summer, as we focused on the Nativity scene in our Faceted Window Series, I offered a Choral Corner selection that was from the Christmas with Robert Shaw performance of 1998, featuring the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. This production included the Young Singers of Callenwolde and the Morehouse College Glee Club. One exciting number in this wonderful evening of Christmas music was a work sung by the Morehouse Glee Club called “Betelehemu,” and it has become one of their trademark pieces. This Christmas song is sung in the Yoruba language, which is spoken in Nigeria and its neighboring countries. The song was written for the Morehouse Glee Club by its director, Dr. Wendell P. Whalum, and it is based on a song that he received from an African student named Michael Babtunde Olatunji in the 1950s. The translation of the text is as follows:

We are glad that we have a Father to trust.
We are glad that we have a Father to rely upon
Where was Jesus born?
Where was He born?
Bethlehem, the city of wonder.
That is where the Father was born for sure.
Praise, praise, praise be to Him.
We thank thee, we thank Thee, we thank Thee for this day,
Gracious Father.
Praise, praise, praise be to Thee,
Merciful Father.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFrqj6-GaPE>

Stafford Turner

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OFFICE HOURS

Mon – Wed: 9am to 1pm
Please call ahead for availability.
(864) 582-7467

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Upcoming Events to Remember

Drive-by Communion

will be on Sunday, December 6 from 1 until 2pm in the front parking lot.

Christmas Eve Worship Pick Up gift

(this is where you pick up your Christmas Eve candle and a warm and cozy gift)

will be on Wednesday, December 16 from 4 until 6pm. Drive thru at EFLC.

Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service

will be live-stream on Thursday, December 24 at 5pm

Publication Notice

The next bi-weekly e-blast newsletter publication will be **Wednesday, December 16, 2020**. Deadline for all articles is **Tuesday, December 15, 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!

IMPORTANT info: This will be the last edition of our e-blast and printed copies of the newsletter for the year of 2020. If you have information that pertains to an event between December 16, 2020 and January 13, 2021, please send it via email (angie@fernwoodchurch.org) by Tuesday, December 15 at Noon.