



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

*Congratulations to Fernwood as we
celebrated our
62nd Church Anniversary
on
Monday, January 11, 2021.*



Proposed 2021 Ministry Plan Schedule & Ballot

**Sunday, January 17, 2021 CHURCH CONFERENCE
to vote on Proposed 2021 Ministry Plan by E-blast ballot.**

Only Fernwood members are eligible to cast a vote. If you or another member of the church does not have access to vote online, please contact, Alan Lyles at 864-216-2303 and your vote will be logged in.

Thank you for giving your prayerful consideration to this important matter. We are looking forward to continuing to be the presence of Christ to each other and our community in this new year.



***The Staff would like to thank everyone for
the most generous Staff Love Offering this
year. We are all truly blessed to be a part
of a loving and caring church. Thank you,
Fernwood for making all of us here on staff
feel loved and appreciated.***



Words from your pastor...

2020 Year in Review

2020 was certainly a year like no other. So far, 2021 hasn't shown any signs of slowing down the crazy train, either. But I thought I would stop for a moment to reflect on this past year and take a look at what we accomplished together.

The last in-person worship service we had at Fernwood was on March 15, 2020. That means we have had (as of today) 47 virtual worship services. I would have never thought that possible before! The services have evolved from fairly rudimentary recordings of a paired-down live service, to fully edited videos, complete with graphics and hymn lyrics, and people reading scriptures and offering prayers from their homes. The worship staff and I have learned how to record the elements of the service so they make sense watching them on a screen, as opposed to watching them live. And I learned a totally new skill: video editing.

We have upgraded our video and web streaming software and will begin to train our AV Team to use this software soon. This will enable us to transition back to a Sunday morning live service, with or without people in the congregation.

Our online platform has increased our reach exponentially. Previously, somewhere between 30-50 people watched the recordings of our services online. Today, over 1,000 people are exposed to our service each week via Facebook, and hundreds watch at least a portion of the service. That is to say nothing of the weekly Bible Studies offered by Gerald Keown, and our Wednesday night web series, *Between Two Fernwoods*, which has allowed us to get to know so many of our members in a deeper way.

This has also allowed us to continue to grow during this time. In 2020, we added 11 new members to the congregation, 9 since we stopped meeting in person. Some of these new members do not live in the Spartanburg area. Our online ministry will continue to be their primary point of contact with the church.

Financially, we struggled much of the year, as you might expect. But in December, you dug deep and giving from all sources exceeded expenses by over \$40,000! Thank you for your faithful generosity!

We found creative ways to continue to impact our community: we transitioned our Wednesday night meals to help Hope Center for Children, we modified our coat give away, and we created a "Blessing Tree" with warm weather clothing in front of the church. Our phone calling ministry keeps our congregation in touch with one another.

This is by no means all of the great things that happened this year. Even as we continue to grieve those lost to COVID-19 and pray for the future of our nation, I am so deeply thankful for this church and the ways in which you have handled these unprecedented times with unprecedented courage, vision, and grace.

Matt
Senior Pastor

Special Announcement and Congratulations, Bob!

Bob Dalton has joined Wofford College as a writer/editor. Bob and Kathy thank Fernwood for its prayers after his newspaper career ended in April. Bob is adapting to more normal business hours and holidays, while daughter, Delaney (Furman '18) is attempting to come to terms with ol' dad being a Terrier!



More Thank you notes...

Dear Fernwood Family,
Words cannot express how much your calls, cards, text and prayers meant during my hospitalization due to COVID 19. The blanket was perfect as I settled in each day. I am hoping everyone has a blessed New Year and can return to in-person worship in 2021.

In Christ's Name,
Laura Davis

Fernwood Church Members,

Many "Thank you" for all the beautiful cards over the past year and all the phone calls. The Christmas throw is much appreciated. It is so warm and cuddly.

Madge Atkins

Fernwood Family,

Just a note to thank you and express my gratitude to Fernwood and our local missions for the many, many cards I have received from church members, along with weekly calls to say hello and ask if I need anything. Our church is outstanding! I am so grateful to be among Christians who live Christ-like lives.

Joyce Childers



Choral Corner

One of the impacts of the pandemic is the suspension of many various arts organizations, from small town orchestras to major music festivals. All are on hold until it is safe to perform before an audience, although many have found a way to salvage at least some means of presentation through video or virtual performances. I will look forward to the return of our music festivals and the rich infusion of culture they provide our society. I have been fortunate to attend quite a few festivals over my years in music, but one that still remains high on my “bucket list” is the BBC Proms in London, England. Each summer for eight weeks, this festival presents some 75 concerts, ranging from small chamber programs to grand works, the latter being presented in the massive Royal Albert Hall. The festival has been called the largest in the world. The 2019 season of the Proms included a performance of one of my favorite choral works, BELSHAZZAR’S FEAST by the English composer William Walton. This 35-minute composition is a mesmerizing account of the fall of the Babylonian king, Belshazzar, who saw a hand appear in thin air to write on the wall, MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN (Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting). That very night, Belshazzar was slain. This performance features baritone Gerald Finley and is conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. The final chorus of the work is a one of rejoicing that the king was slain and the Jews, who were captive in Babylon, are set free, and it is called Then Sing Aloud to God our Strength. The texts are below:

*Then sing aloud to God our strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
Take a psalm, bring hither the timbrel,
Blow up the trumpet in the new moon,
Blow up the trumpet in Zion
For Babylon the Great is fallen, fallen.
Alleluia!*

*Then sing aloud to God our strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob,
While the Kings of the Earth lament
And the merchants of the Earth
Weep, wail and rend their raiment.
They cry, Alas, Alas, that great city,
In one hour is her judgement come.*

*The trumpeters and pipers are silent,
And the harpers have ceased to harp,
And the light of a candle shall shine no more.*

*Then sing aloud to God our strength.
Make a joyful noise to the God of Jacob.
For Babylon the Great is fallen.
Alleluia!*

The link below is the complete performance, so you will need to move the counter forward to 25:20 for the final chorus, but if you are interested, you would definitely enjoy the entire work!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLIJWE1RoEk&t=1634s>

Stafford Turner



Prayers of the People Highlights January 17-23, 2021

Matt & Michelle Norman
Barcelona, Spain

www.cbf.net/norman

Prayers of the People Highlights January 24-30, 2021

David & Lauren Bass
Cambodia

www.cbf.net/bass



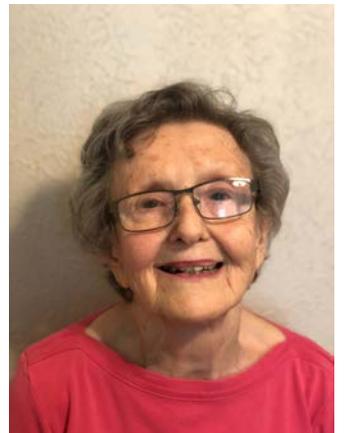
Family Night Supper Support - Will You Help?

We are supporting a local mission with meals. The Hope Center for Children are excited and pleased to be receiving these meals. Tina will be preparing larger casserole type meals along with sides. They have 3 residential homes that she will be preparing for. These meals will be hot and fresh and delivered on Wednesday afternoon at 5:30pm at each location.

Are you willing to continue to pay for your meal, but allow it to be served to your neighbors? If you would like to help pay for some meals, you can write "Family Supper" on your check or choose "Family Supper" when you give online. Please give generously and help spread the word to others. Thank you to those of you who continue to support this important ministry!

Welcome New Member!

The Fernwood family would like to welcome, **Valerie Harley** who joined on January 1, 2021. She is moving her letter from Morningside Baptist Church. Welcome, Valerie!





News...

I think most of us are pleased to say goodbye to 2020. Even though most of 2020 activities were virtual, it was still a busy and fruitful year. At our Ministry Council meeting this month, we reviewed some of our activities during this most unusual year.

- Ministry Council was realigned to reflect the core practices of Fernwood: worship, belong, serve, and invest.
- Groups continued to meet virtually to study various books.
- All Ministry Council, Sunday School, and Standing Committee positions were filled.
- Ministry Council sponsored a drive by visitation for many of our members this summer.
- Funds from Supper Meals were used to assist in providing meals for Hope Center for Children.
- Ministry Council had a successful and safe drive by trick or treat event for the community.
- The Coat Ministry continued in 2020 but used Regenesys as a distribution center.
- A Blessing Tree was started outside the church as way to distribute gloves, scarves, hats, etc. to the community.
- The Worship Team assisted with all the worship services this year including Lent and Advent, drive by Communion, and Christmas Eve gift bags.

Now we are busy brainstorming plans for 2021.

It is my pleasure to serve as chair of such a dedicated group.

Thank you.

Sara Gardner, Ministry Council Chair

If you would like a copy of the December Approved Ministry Council Minutes, please call the church office and Angie will print you one.

**FERNWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
OPERATING FINANCIAL RESULTS
Year-To-Date December 2020**

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	Actual Better or (Worse) Than <u>Budget</u>
OPERATING RECEIPTS			
Contributions Received	\$373,646	\$386,000	(\$12,354)
Use of Building Receipts	\$5,825	\$0	\$5,825
Interest Income	\$572	\$0	\$572
Processing Fees	\$549	\$0	\$549
Other Income	\$236	\$0	\$236
PPP Loan Proceeds	\$29,218	\$0	\$29,218
Transfers	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Operating Receipts	\$410,046	\$386,000	\$24,046
OPERATING EXPENDITURES			
Total Personnel Related	\$172,728	\$176,730	\$4,002
Children / Youth Ministry	\$306	\$1,832	\$1,526
Music Ministry	\$1,627	\$4,700	\$3,073
Community Ministry	\$23,150	\$23,150	\$0
Ministry Teams	\$4,701	\$10,900	\$6,199
State & World Missions	\$16,370	\$15,450	(\$920)
Operating Ministry	\$150,496	\$153,238	\$2,742
Total Operating Expenditures	\$369,378	\$386,000	\$16,622
OPERATING RECEIPTS MORE(LESS) THAN OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$40,668	\$0	\$40,668

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Publication Notice

The next bi-weekly e-blast newsletter publication will be **Wednesday, January 27, 2021.**
Deadline for all articles is **Tuesday, January 26, 2021 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!