



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

FROM THE DEACONS BENCH



We begin a new year with celebration of your faithfulness to Fernwood. You have been stalwart in your support of our financial needs. Many of you have been engaged in the active ministry opportunities surfacing during the pandemic. You have participated in the preparation of virtual worship by means of scripture readings, passing the peace, and offertory prayers. We have discovered anew that to be the church on mission does not require being present in the same place at the same time. We all miss and long to return to the opportunity to be in the same place at the same time, and the access to effective vaccines will hopefully make that possible by the late summer or early fall. The deacons revisit this issue at every monthly meeting.

Another cause for celebration is the successful closing of the sale of the property on Fernwood Drive. Those resources are now available to enhance needs wherever they exist.

I want to encourage you to continue your faithfulness in stewardship. One such opportunity is the **Capital Appeal** which we are going to emphasize in the early months of this year. We already have some contributions made to this special fund. We are hoping to use this special appeal to provide necessary resources for practical areas related to our physical plant, but also to allow for new ways of extending our ministry outreach. You are now able to contribute to the Capital Appeal by using the **Give Online button** on our website, **selecting Capital Appeal fund** as the focus of your contribution. Please continue your faithful support of our Ministry Plan with your regular tithes and offerings, but consider adding a bit extra to grow this new potential asset. The deacons have pledged to be active in our own support of this appeal and urge you to join us as you are able.

While we have much to celebrate, we also have ongoing concerns. The Fernwood family has been impacted directly by the COVID virus and we have lost beloved members to it. We grieve their loss and reach out to family members left behind. We earnestly pray for those of our congregation or connected to it who continue to struggle with this disease. As we begin this new year, we do so with a great deal of hope, yet with the awareness we must continue to follow the necessary guidelines to protect ourselves and others from the virus. Please make Angie aware of needs you observe that require our attention.

Thank you for being a faith community at work in these challenging days.

Gerald Keown, Deacon Chair



From the Pastor's Desk...

We are arriving at the season of Lent very soon. Lent is a time of preparation and repentance just before Easter. To mark this season, we have several special worship opportunities. First, on **Wednesday, February 17th at 6:00PM**, we will observe our ***Ash Wednesday service***. It will be emailed out and streamed on our Facebook page. Church members and regular attenders should be receiving, in the next few days, a letter from me containing a small bag of ashes. These ashes will help you participate in our service at your home.

On **Thursday, April 1st at 5:30PM**, we will have an online ***Maundy Thursday service***, focusing on Jesus' last day before his crucifixion. Normally, this service would culminate in the celebration of communion. Instead of communion being observed during the service, the video service will be followed up by ***a drive-through communion service at 6:30PM in front of the church***. I thought it was very meaningful when we had drive-through communion in December, and I look forward to seeing your masked faces again on Maundy Thursday.

I'm also grateful to Barbara Jean Callaway who has volunteered to set up a labyrinth outside during the lenten season. It will be under the trellise in the Harry Harr Garden. That is located down the outdoor steps between the chapel and the church offices. You may come by anytime to walk the labyrinth, meditate, and pray. A labyrinth is an excellent aid to our spiritual focus during Lent.

I don't know how long it will be until we are able to worship indoors on Sunday morning, but as the weather begins to warm, I hope we can plan some additional outdoor fellowship and worship opportunities for us. Stay tuned for those developments.

Thank you for continuing to be such a faithful, joyful, and supportive church. I look forward to walking our Lenten journey together.

Matt, Senior Pastor

Zoom "Coffee time in the Concourse"

beginning Sunday, February 21 from 9:30am until 10am.

A Zoom link will be sent in our weekly worship email.

This will be a time for members to see and talk to each other having their juice or coffee at home before Sunday School begins online at 10am.



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!

News from the Ministry Council...

Our Ministry Council meeting began with a prayer that asked us to trust that God is present even during all the changes that we face, and to be open to new opportunities and forms of ministry whenever and wherever those opportunities might be.

I think that is appropriate for all of us to trust God to help us be open to opportunities for ministry. Here are some upcoming opportunities:

- We will continue to serve meals to Hope Center for Children, but we will be also be providing meals to St. Luke's Free Clinic 4 times per year. This is in addition to the meals that some of the other groups from our church provide to St. Luke's.
- The Blessing Tree continues to bless members of our community. If you have items to donate, contact the church office.
- There will soon be an opportunity for you to socialize with your Fernwood family via Zoom on Sunday mornings. You'll hear more about this opportunity soon.
- You should be receiving an envelope with ashes and directions for the virtual Ash Wednesday service soon. Please plan to participate.

Please contact me or the church office if you are looking for a way to serve at Fernwood. As always, it is my pleasure to serve as chair of such a dedicated group.

Thank you.

Sara Gardner, Ministry Council Chair



NEW Office Hours

Monday: 9am until 1pm
Tuesday: 9am until 1pm
Wednesday: 9am until 1pm

Anyone entering the building MUST have a mask on.

To be sure that it is safe and a good time to enter the church, call 864-582-7467 and schedule an appointment.

Ways to get information to us:

1. Call the church office 864-582-7467 and leave a message on the answering machine.
2. If it is information which is needed before we return to the office or an emergency, you can email: Angie@fernwoodchurch.org or call her cell: 864-978-7404.

Fernwood Baptist Church
P. O. Box 7058
Spartanburg, SC 29304

OFFICE HOURS

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

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STAFF

Rev. Matt Johnson
Senior Pastor – 502-974-4480
Matt@fernwoodchurch.org

Angie M. Quinn
Administrative Assistant
864-978-7404
Angie@fernwoodchurch.org

Dr. Stafford Turner
Director of Music Ministries
sturner14@gardner-webb.edu

Mary Helen Wessinger
Financial Administrator
Maryhelen@fernwoodchurch.org

Blood Drive

Our next scheduled time with the Blood Connection will be **Sunday, March 7**. To schedule your appointment, please contact Penny Ginn at 864-923-0232 or pennyginn13@gmail.com. You can also go on the Blood Connection website and sign up.



Prayers of the People Highlights
February 14-20, 2021

Greg & Sue Smith
Fredericksburg, Virginia
www.cbf.net/smith

Prayers of the People Highlights
February 21-27, 2021

Mira & Sasha Zivanov
St. Louis, Missouri
www.cbf.net/zivanov

Publication Notice

The next bi-weekly e-blast newsletter publication will be **Wednesday, February 24, 2021**. Deadline for all articles is **Tuesday, February 23, 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!