

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT FRONT STREET UMC

“A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS”

DECEMBER 16 AT 10:45 A.M. IN THE SANCTUARY
NO 8:45 A.M. SERVICE

NOTE: 9:00 A.M. ADLERSGATE'S SERVICE WORSHIPS AS USUAL
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

A CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

DECEMBER 24 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE SANCTUARY

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE

DECEMBER 24 AT 8:00 P.M. IN THE SANCTUARY

DECEMBER 30 WORSHIP SERVICES

9:00 A.M. ALDERSGATE SERVICE WITH BREAKFAST

11:00 A.M. WESLEY COVENANT COMBINED SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY

NO 8:45 A.M. SERVICE

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WATERCOURSES IN THE NEGEV CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER
dried watercourses of the Negev in due season. The intimacy they have shared with God prepares them to face an uncertain present with rejoicing hearts.

We don't always emphasize how the longing and anticipation of Advent is meant to expose the parched places of our personal and communal lives, spaces that need the nourishment of God's healing presence. Psalm 126 sings of joyful relief because the people know what to expect from the God who brought them out of slavery in Egypt and who restored them from exile. They trust the Lord to be as faithful and timely as God has always been.

Psalm 126 doesn't say that God will act from heaven to remove all our tears and sorrow so that joy may come. No, it says, "those who plant tears will reap the harvest with joyful shouts! ... Those who go out, crying and carrying their seed, will come home with joyful shouts, carrying bails of grain." When suffering comes, God gives the one thing we need, the one thing we cannot produce ourselves: *grace and divine presence*. And so in due time, God's son is born into the world, not because the world is ready and willing, but because it's parched, cracked, and pitiable; because nothing can stop the roaring waters of joy from bringing justice to a world still divided and hurting; because nothing can keep Jesus from seeing us, loving us, and wanting to heal us from everything that has wounded and parched our souls.

May the waters of God's grace course through our lives and the lives of all who long for the nourishment of God *with us*.

Pastor Patrick

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by Front Street United Methodist Church
136 South Fisher Street
Burlington NC 27215
Postmaster, Send Address Changes to:
Front Street United Methodist Church
PO Box 2597
136 South Fisher Street
Burlington NC 27216-2597
Church Office (336) 227-6263
Fax (336) 227-7905
email: fsumc@frontstreetumc.org
website: www.frontstreetumc.org
FSUMC Playschool (336) 227-6603
FSUMC Afterschool (336) 227-6772

FRONTLINE

Focusing on the life and ministry
of Front Street UMC



December 13, 2018 Volume MMXVIII No. 22

WATERCOURSES IN THE NEGEV

Read Psalm 126

Psalm 126 voices Israel's thirst for God to redeem their circumstances in the way that the rains refresh and nourish the great watercourses of their native Negev Desert. The people of Israel remember how God rescued them from exile and returned them to the land. They confess, "When the LORD changed Zion's circumstances for the better, it was like we had been dreaming." In other words, we had forgotten who we were, what our story was, and who God is. But suddenly God broke into our sorrow and loved us by leading us home. God showed up as sure and surprising as the rains that bring water and life to the desert. Life requires radical trust, though often our reactions betray our uncertainty that God will actually flood the droughts we suffer.

Philip Britts was a British poet and horticulturalist during the early twentieth century. He once wrote about the difficulty of trusting God in all seasons of life: "We are so distracted by many things. Our spiritual awareness waxes and wanes in intensity. ... We may get lifted up in moments of tenderness but will be cast down in hours of dryness." Like the desert, human life, as diverse as our experiences are, rarely settles into equilibrium. Dry seasons leave us feeling empty and unfulfilled. Rainy seasons fill us until we're spilling over with joy and thanksgiving. Being a human being is hard. If only we had the ability to trust God to intervene and transform things!

In their moment Israel decidedly remembers the intimacy of God. They remember how God restored their circumstances in the past, a history that tells them to expect and recognize God's faithfulness now. God will come just like the waters come rushing down the mountains and into the

(CONTINUED)

A LOOK AHEAD:

KNOWING CHRIST

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

Join the Chancel Choir and Epworth Ringers on **Sunday, December 16 at 10:45 a.m.** for our annual service of Lessons and Carols. PLEASE NOTE: There will be a contemporary worship service in Aldersgate Hall at 9:00 a.m., but NO 8:45 a.m. worship service and no Sunday School for Children and Youth.



Christ Offering



You are the Light of the world.

CHRIST OFFERING

On **Sunday, December 16** a special Christ Offering will be taken. This offering assures that we not only meet our obligations for the year, but that we testify to the light which is Jesus Christ our Lord. Envelopes for your gift will be provided in the pew slots.

GROWING IN CHRIST

FAMILY/LIFE MINISTRY TEAM

Carol Sineath (in her retirement) plans to revive our Family/Life Ministries, and is seeking individuals to join this ministry team. The vision for this team is to offer both inter-generational and generational opportunities for our church family. Some of the possible ideas are:

- Grandparent buddies - think Bible buddies but connecting families with our shut-ins
- A parenting class
- Marriage enrichment class
- A family advent workshop

The possibilities are limited only by our ability to envision! If you would like to be a part of this ministry team, please contact Carol at cwsineath@gmail.com or 336-263-2495.

A team planning meeting will be scheduled in January 2019.

SHARING CHRIST

TREES OF LOVE

Thank you to everyone who has adorned our Trees of Love to share Christ with our neighbors this season. It's not too late to participate—please return all items (unwrapped) to the trees by **Wednesday, December 19**. Visit www.frontstreetumc.org



for additional information on each Tree of Love. Thank you!

2018 BUCKNER MISSION MAN TRIATHLON DISBURSEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who supported our 15th annual Buckner Mission Man Triathlon in July. \$35,000 was raised and disbursed amongst the following ministries: Allied Churches of Alamance County, Positive Attitude Youth Center, Methodist Home for Children, Missionary Air Group, Sustainable Alamance, Family Abuse Services, and FSUMC's Adult Mission Fund. We couldn't have achieved this without you! Interested in taking more of a leadership role in planning this event? We'd love to have you! Email missionmantriathlon@gmail.com for more information.



2018 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

A friendly reminder from the Church Office: in order for contributions to be included as a contribution towards your 2018 statement, please have mail postmarked or dropped at the church office NO LATER THAN **December 31**. All contributions received after December 31 will be applied to your 2019 statement.

Please note: When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction.

SAVE THESE JANUARY DATES

2019 JANUARY LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

Saturday morning, January 26 from 9 a.m.-12p.m. and **Sunday afternoon, January 27**, from 2 p.m.-5 p.m. Topics and registration link will be coming soon!

FAMILY WINTERFEST AND CHILI COOK-OFF

Our Family Winter Festival and Chili Cook-Off will be on **Sunday, January 27 from 5-7 p.m.** Ms. Marcy and the Children's Council have planned all kinds of fun, winter activities for all ages. Think you make some pretty good chili? Enter our Chili Cook-Off and let your Front Street friends be the judge! Full details of the Winter Festival and how to enter the Chili Cook-Off competition coming in the New Year.



Prayers

- **Carol Brown** who is resuming treatment for cancer
- **Rev. Stewart Crank**
- **Pat Pittman Fraser** who is under Hospice care at home
- **Julie McAteer** who is recovering from ankle surgery
- **Bill Sharpe** as he continues to battle prostate cancer

CEREAL SUNDAY ON JANUARY 6



Please deposit cereal or other canned/dry goods in the tubs in the cabinet in the Welcome Center.



The church office will be closed Monday, December 24 through Wednesday, December 26 for Christmas, and Monday, January 1 for New Year's Day. Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year from all the staff at FSUMC!

FINANCIAL GIVING UPDATE

YTD Actual Giving - \$1,090,728.05
YTD Budgeted Giving - \$1,334,287.42

STAFF

Senior Pastor
Ross Carter

Pastor of Discipleship
Patrick Murphy

Youth Minister
Chris Huneycutt

Director of Children's Ministry
Marcy Z. McAdams

Coordinator of Congregational Care
Carol W. Sineath

Organist/Director of Music
Matt Brittain

Director of Aldersgate Music
Clay Stevenson

Choirmaster
Laura J. Sam

Finance Manager
Tammy T. Page

Administrative Assistant
Pamela P. Shields

Communications Coordinator
Joanna E. C. Strelow

Office Assistant
Heather S. Carson

Building Superintendent
Jackie N. Long

Maintenance
Joe L. Peloquin
Zach Mace

Playschool/Babies Morning Out Director
Rebecca H. Hurdle

Afterschool Director
Catherine H. Mills

ON CALL EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER:
336-380-4136