

First Newton

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Becoming one diverse community
Worshipping Jesus passionately
Practicing unprecedented acts of hospitality

LOVING ALL PEOPLE INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

FIRST NEWTON HONORED BY ECCCM

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry (ECCCM). On February 10, 2019, ECCCM celebrated its original founding churches including First Newton. A certificate was presented to Rev. Lara "Willis" Greene and John Coffey who attended the event (photo below). The mission of ECCCM is to provide programs and services to help lift an individual or household from a crisis situation, moving them to self-sufficiency.

"I have been impressed with the operation of ECCCM after volunteering in their warehouse multiple times over the past few years. I really like their strategy to help those in need solve their problems for the long term," said ECCCM board member Stephen Sims. "I chose to become involved with ECCCM because of the mission of financial crisis assistance and also the financial education provided," said Jim Mauney, ECCCM board member. Anyone interested in volunteering may visit ECCCM.org for more information, or call Stephen at 828-302-5631.



LENTEN SERMON SERIES & ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 6 marks the beginning of Lent, a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The 40 days represent the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry. Lent is a time of self-examination and reflection as we prepare for the coming of Easter.

This year's Lenten sermon series will focus on the Lord's Prayer and how it bends our hearts toward God, placing us at the center of the heart and mind of Jesus. Each week we'll focus on key passages from the prayer found in Matthew 6.

Once again this year, Pastor Willis and pastors from other local Methodist Churches will celebrate Ash Wednesday (March 6) on the Court Square. Pastors will offer the imposition of ashes and share the message of God's love with those in our community.

- Imposition of Ashes on the Square downtown from 12 noon - 1:30 p.m.
- Ash Wednesday worship service in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m.

CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF MINISTRY AT ABERNETHY LAURELS

For the last five years Tracy Wilson and her son Adam have been visiting First Newton church members residing at Abernethy Laurels. The two take a copy of the church newsletter and often a small gift when they visit each month. "It's really great how they welcome us," said 17 year-old Adam. "They didn't know us at first, they only knew we were from their church. They are always so excited to see us." Tracy explained that she and Adam feel as if they received more from the visits than the residents at Abernethy Laurels. "We enjoy their stories, laugh together, learn about each other, and grow as people," said Tracy. "Isn't that what life is all about – connecting with other people."

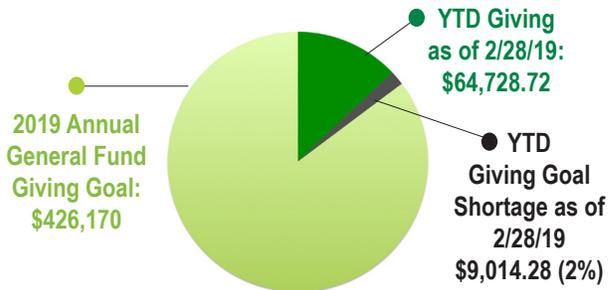
Tracy said that what seemed to mean the most to the church members they visited was that their church remembered them, and continued to reach out to them, to keep them connected. If you would like to learn more about opportunities for visiting church members that are unable to attend worship on a regular basis, please contact Brandy Burnette in the Church Office.



AN UPDATE FROM THE FINANCE TEAM

New for 2019, the Finance Team will be providing a monthly snapshot of our year-to-date giving along with additional quick facts to keep us up to speed on our church finances.

Detailed financial updates are shared at the monthly Church Council meetings and notes are made available in the Welcome Center. The next Church Council meeting will be held Tuesday, March 12 at 7 p.m. in the Gomedela Room. As a reminder, meetings are open for anyone to attend. You may also contact George Wilkinson with questions at gwilkinson0228@gmail.com



PLEASE NOTE: We collected \$719.46 from the hunger basket offerings in January and February. This money will be given to ECCCM (Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry) and The Corner Table.

AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	FEBRUARY 2018	FEBRUARY 2019
Sunday School	33	45
8:30 Contemporary Worship Service	55	60
10:30 Traditional Worship Service	131	104
TOTAL WORSHIP AVERAGE	155	163

**Attendance from the former 8:30 a.m. service in the Sanctuary is counted with the Traditional Worship Service for the 2018 average. Also note, there was only one service held on February 4, 2018 at 11 a.m. due to inclement weather.*



Bishop Paul Leeland will hold a meeting for the Catawba Valley & Appalachian Districts on March 31, at 3 p.m. at St. Luke's UMC in Hickory to discuss the outcome of the Special General Conference session. This event is open to clergy and laity.

UNPRECEDENTED ACTS OF HOSPITALITY

HOSPITALITY TEAMS UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 90 Day Hospitality Challenge, **AND** for your continued commitment as we journey toward Easter. This is a busy season for the church and we look forward to welcoming guests who visit First Newton in search of a church home.

In March, we will begin delivering a "welcome bag" to first time guests that worship with us. Members of the hospitality teams will take a bag of "goodies" to guests who submit their contact information. Thank you to the various ministry groups for assembling the items for the bags.

If you were not able to submit a serve card last Fall and would like to get involved in our hospitality ministry **OR** if you are currently serving and would be willing to lead a team, we would love to hear from you. The following is a list of the current hospitality team needs:

- Team Leader at 10 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month
- Team Leader at 8 a.m. on the third Sunday of each month
- Greeters at 8 a.m. on the first, third and fourth Sunday
- Refreshment Server at 10 a.m. on the second Sunday each month

Please contact Brandy Burnette in the Church Office at 828-464-8422 or email brandyburnette@firstnewton.org for more information or to join the hospitality team.



JOY MEETING THURSDAY, MARCH 14

The next JOY gathering will be Thursday, March 14. Refreshments are served at 9:30 a.m., and the program begins at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This month's program is "Imperfect but Forgiven" a group of men from the Catawba Correctional Center who sing and speak about their rehabilitation. The lunch menu is meatloaf, mashed potatoes, cabbage and congealed lime salad. RSVP to the Church Office (828-464-8422) by noon on Tuesday, March 12. For more info, contact Bev Underwood @ 828-465-0481. **PLEASE NOTE:** There is a JOY volunteers meeting on Tuesday, March 12 at 2 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.



NOTE CARDS FOR SALE TO SUPPORT THE CORNER TABLE

Deacon Shannon LeMaster-Smith has been nominated for The Baker's Dozen society at The Corner Table Soup Kitchen. The Baker's Dozen inducts thirteen of the community's most dynamic and inspiring women each year – women who believe in making a difference – and empowers them to act on that belief in a fulfilling and measurable way. Shannon has designed and produced note card sets for sale to raise money for The Corner Table Soup Kitchen. The note card sets are \$10 per pack and includes eight square cards (two of each: hope, joy, love, peace) with sunflower yellow envelopes. If you would like to see or purchase the note card sets, please see Shannon or Brandy Burnette in the Church Office.



All 6th -12th graders are welcome to join the Youth of First Newton for worship and fun. Here's our March schedule:

- **Sunday, March 3** - Youth Group from 3:30 - 5 p.m.
- **Sunday, March 10** - Youth Group from 3:30 - 5 p.m.
- **Sunday, March 17** - Family St. Patrick's Day Party, 5 p.m.
- **March 29-31** - Senior High Retreat



For their Senior project, our Youth have been busy redecorating & reorganizing the Activity Room, new paint, new layout, new feel. Stop by and check it out!



Registration deadlines are coming up for several youth events. Quick links are available on the Youth Facebook Page.

Wilderness Trail – Summer hike program for ages 12-18. Deadline 3/1/19: <https://goo.gl/forms/VAXkUAeq3d8y0k702>

Middle School Retreat – May 3-5, 2019. Deadline is 3/1/19. <https://goo.gl/forms/lyw2lk3ZomMXPWYq1>

Mission Trip – June 23-29, 2019. Deadline is 3/17/19. <https://goo.gl/forms/Drb1YifCGL3JWOwH3>



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL is available for children ages 3 – 5th grade. These groups meet on the level below the Sanctuary from 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Our 1st-5th graders are participating in a Lenten series focused on the Lord's Prayer.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM MEETING will be held Sunday, March 10 at 11:45 a.m.



k4C is an after school ministry for children in Kindergarten - 6th Grade and meets Wednesdays from 3:00-5:30 p.m. during the school year. Our theme this year at Kids for Christ is "Journey with Jesus." For more info, contact Shannon at deaconshannon@firstnewton.org. **Here's a look at our March schedule:**

March 6: Ash Wednesday

March 13: Journey with Jesus - From Parables to Palms

March 20: Mission Project at The Corner Table Soup Kitchen

March 27: Journey with Jesus - Entry into Jerusalem

NEWTON METHODIST PRESCHOOL

Newton Methodist Preschool will begin our 2018-2019 Enrollment on March 1. Our preschool offers quality childcare in a safe, happy, Christian environment for ages One Year through Pre-K. For more details or to take a tour, contact Kristi Harvell, Preschool Director at 828-465-6397 or email newtonmethodistpreschool@gmail.com.

The Preschool's Spring Community Service Project will be going on March 3 - 10. We will be collecting items for the Catawba County Schools Backpack Program. The Backpack Program works with local elementary, middle and high schools throughout the county to provide children with a backpack filled with food every Friday during the school year. The Program provides nourishment to students in Catawba County who are hungry on the weekends. We would love for our church family to join our service project by donating items on Sunday, March 3 and 10. The greatest needs at this time are: canned soup, dry pasta dinners (like rice a roni/pasta roni), kid-friendly snacks, and canned veggies. There will be a grocery cart located near the church office and welcome center, where you may place your items. We know you can help us fill the grocery cart full!





from **Ron Sinclair**
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

“Music expresses the inexpressible, gives voice to the unspeakable, awakens the spirit to God’s presence, and unites disparate people; it challenges our identity, calls us outside ourselves, raises our spirits, and lifts us to the throne of grace. Music gives wings to worship.”

~ William Bradley Roberts,
Music and Vital Congregations: A Practical Guide for Clergy

After just a few short weeks, it is obvious that you all really know how to make someone new feel welcomed! Thank you! I am excited about being here at First Newton, and look forward to getting to know each one of you better, and to journeying with you in the years to come. I look forward to worshipping together and sharing your stories, hopes and dreams. I also look forward to making music with you each week in worship.

I grew up in a singing household. Paint the house? Can’t paint without singing! Long drives to see grandparents were mostly spent singing together. My dad is an incredible tenor and taught me that singing is as much a part of life as breathing. And really, you can’t have one without the other. So I grew up singing. First church solo? I was five years old, and even had an accompanist! Of course, I surprised her when I looked out at the congregation and decided they wanted to hear a different song than the “Jesus Loves Me” I was supposed to sing. So I launched into “Blue Suede Shoes” by Elvis instead. To this day, I can still see my dad’s face as he tried to look angry through the laughter that was trying to come out of his face.

Today as I write this, I am visiting my parents at their home in Aiken, SC. And as always, I am reminded just how important music and singing is to one’s soul. Several years ago, my dad was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. He is still “with us” in so many ways as he fights this horrible disease, but its toll is increasingly evident. It is so easy to see him smile. All we have to do is sing, and new life comes to his eyes. He knows every song from our past, including harmonies and second and third verses of even the most obscure songs. Our favorites to sing together, of course, are hymns and gospel songs.

You know, the Wesleys were onto something when they taught folks in frontier America the tenets of the Christian faith through hymns and spiritual songs. What we sing stays with us for a lifetime, even when cruel disease comes for us. And as the quote from William Bradley Roberts’ book says above, “music gives wings to worship.”

So add your voice in worship each week! Your voice need not be perfect for it to make God happy and for your own soul to be filled. If you REALLY want to double your benefits, choir rehearsal is at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays!

See you at church . . . and SING!

Ron



Thank you to all the folks who helped with reorganizing & redecorating the Choir Room. If you have not seen the updates, you are invited to stop by and check it out. Ron especially invites you to come by on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. You may see the updates and participate in choir rehearsal!



DO YOU PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT?

We want to use instruments for upcoming worship services, and need to know who in the congregation plays a musical instrument. Please let Ron Sinclair, our Director of Music, know right away if you play an instrument. Thank you!



NEW PRAYER STATIONS SET UP FOR LENT

The Prayer Room (Chapel) will be set up with new Lenten prayer stations for you to experience, or you may choose to simply sit in the presence of God. The new stations will include devotionals and prayers for Lent, prayer eggs, symbols of Lent & Easter, a prayer chain and other Lenten activities. The Prayer Room is open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mon. - Thurs. & Sunday's 8 a.m. to noon.

You're Invited
to a St. Patrick's Day Party!

Sunday,
March 17 @ 5 p.m.
in the Fellowship Hall

We will have a costume contest,
games, prizes, and fun for all ages!

RSVP by March 10:
FIRSTNEWTON.ORG/MARCH 17



SAVE THE DATE!

Community Easter Egg Hunt

This **FREE** family-friendly event is for children of all ages!

Saturday, April 13 @ 10 a.m.

Hosted by First United Methodist Church



Refreshments ● **Face Painting** ● **FREE Fun for the Whole Family!**

WE CELEBRATE WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY . . .

BIRTHDAYS

Judith Bolick 3/1	Roy Lewis 3/12	John Brooks 3/22
Julie Branton 3/1	Clair Gilbert..... 3/13	Adelaide Fisher..... 3/22
Janet Byrd 3/1	Chris Robison 3/13	Andrew Hollingsworth ... 3/22
Tammy Smith..... 3/2	Cindy Crawford..... 3/14	Sara Copeland..... 3/24
Douglas Webb 3/2	Wadine Smith 3/14	Dianne Tilley 3/24
Meghan Campbell 3/3	Dennis Coffey 3/15	Kelsie Yoder..... 3/24
Will Autry, Jr. 3/5	Al Ellis..... 3/15	Wilson Caldwell, III 3/26
Tonya Moss 3/5	John David Hardin 3/15	Theo Elliott 3/26
Mark Willard..... 3/5	Anna Meshaw..... 3/15	Jeremy Lane..... 3/26
Chloe Killian 3/5	Mary Catherine Thornburg...3/15	Wayne Swofford 3/26
Ken Lawing..... 3/6	Brianna Vanover 3/15	James Baggatta..... 3/27
Hali Robinson 3/7	Debbie Carter 3/16	Susan Holbrook 3/27
Charles Foster II 3/7	Michael Devos 3/16	Maggie Jackson..... 3/27
Russell Hunsucker..... 3/7	Sawyer Moss 3/16	Laura Martin 3/28
Christopher Setzer..... 3/7	Alex White 3/16	Seth Moss..... 3/28
Benjamin Elledge 3/8	Cheryce Gregory 3/17	Patrice Auspitz..... 3/29
Erin Eller 3/8	Lillie Sims 3/18	Quint Ervin 3/29
Lauren Lewis 3/9	Taylor Stone..... 3/19	Nick Hahn 3/29
Evelyne Bevan 3/10	Nat Simpson 3/19	Norris McRee 3/29
Michael Gantt 3/10	Faye Swofford 3/19	Bob Saunders 3/29
Barbara Whitener 3/11	Trent Driscoll 3/21	Ryan Rights..... 3/30
Deanna Kelly 3/12	Adam Hardin 3/21	Tyler Smith..... 3/30
	Lisa Johnson 3/21	Billy Griffis..... 3/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Scott & Gina King 3/1	Matt & Erica Isenhour 3/13
Bert & Mary Miller 3/1	Martin & Corinna Driscoll 3/20
Jerry & Laura DeVos 3/6	Greg & Lisa Blaser..... 3/26
David & Doris White 3/10	Sam & Sonia Foster..... 3/28
Chris & Suzy Cadwallader 3/13	Joel & Mary Alice McCombs 3/28
	John & JoAnne Hewins 3/30

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Lara "Willis" Greene, Pastor | P: 828-461-5918 | E: willisgreene@firstnewton.org
Shannon LeMaster-Smith, Deacon, Minister of Discipleship - Children, Youth & Outreach
 P: 336-460-1769 | E: DeaconShannon@firstnewton.org
Brandy Burnette, Church Administrator | P: 828-464-8422 | E: brandyburnette@firstnewton.org
Ron Sinclair, Director of Music | E: ronsinclair@firstnewton.org
John Coffey, Organist | E: johnnyjava@earthlink.net
Michael Roberts, Praise Team Director | E: jasper.angeline@gmail.com
Kristi Spencer, Communications Director | P: 704-607-3280 | E: kristispencer@firstnewton.org
Melissa Ervin, Nursery Director | E: melervin06@gmail.com
Kristi Harvell, Preschool Director | P: 828-465-6397 | E: newtonmethodistpreschool@gmail.com

FEBRUARY MEMORIALS

Ken Keener - General Fund
 Melba Nichols - General Fund

FEBRUARY HONORARIUMS

Willis Greene - General Fund



WANT TO HONOR SOMEONE WITH FLOWERS?

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone or celebrate a special anniversary or birthday with flowers for the altar in the Sanctuary, please contact Brandy Burnette in the Church Office at 828-464-8422 or email brandyburnette@firstnewton.org to reserve the Sunday of your choice.



spring
forward
SUNDAY, MARCH 10

WEATHER ALERTS:

We will communicate any changes to our church schedule via local TV (WBTB, WCNC, & WSOC), in addition to email, Facebook, and website postings. **NEW: Sign up to receive a text alert.** Simply text: @1stnewton to 81010.