



A NEW Focus

December, 2022 | Issue 10

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

THE OTHER SIDE OF HARD DECISIONS

What's the treasure that lies on the other side of hard decisions? I've been thinking about that in the midst of the conversations that Hinton Avenue and First UMC have been having over the last few months. There's a lot to think about. How does a congregation take stock of its history, celebrate its accomplishments, and move to what comes next? How do two congregations mesh their lives together? What happens to old buildings with many needs?

It's hard, no doubt. These questions land on our ears the way Jesus's words must have hit when people expressed a desire to follow him but pleaded for time to take care of family business. *"Let the dead bury their own dead" must have sounded like cruelty of the first degree [Luke 9:59-60].*

But what about the freedom on the other side of those hard decisions?

When the term paper is written...when the house sale is final...when the resignation letter is out of your hands and on

the boss's desk...there is a new landscape before us. It may be frightening, but it opens up things that could not be imagined before.

Rebekah Simon-Peter, a United Methodist pastor and leader, says that you know you've got yourself a Jesus-sized dream when it's bigger than you can accomplish on your own. If we only attempt the things that we believe we can do with our own resources, are we really trusting that God can do more than we can imagine?

The new year is going to bring a new season for us. Some hard questions will be answered. And then...we get to walk into new territory. To borrow a phrase from Buffalo Springfield, there's something happening here. What it is ain't exactly clear. But it's full of the possibility that God can do something great with it. And we get to be part of it.

Stand firm,
Pastor Alex



TIME TO ORDER CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS IN HONOR OR MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE.

Flowers will be placed in the Sanctuary beginning Sunday Dec. 18 for worship and remain through worship on Christmas Day.

- Price is \$10 for either a red or white Poinsettia (color cannot be designated).
- Please notate how you would like the name to appear in the bulletin.
- Checks can be made to FUMC with poinsettia in the memo line. Deadline is Dec. 15.

To place an order - carolynmcgee@cvillefirstumc.org



ADVENT CALENDAR 2022

- ◇ **December 4** – *Birthday Party for Jesus!* Lunch for Children, Youth and their adults and families. 11:15am in the Fellowship Hall.
- ◇ **December 4** - *Jingle Mystery and Magic.....and Jazz* – 4pm in the Sanctuary Beryl Wilkes and Dubie Dubendorfer are performing in this wonderful tradition! Love offerings will be accepted
- ◇ **December 8** – *Pints and Hymns* – Christmas Edition – (Place TBD)
- ◇ **December 11** - *Magnify Choir presents, "That Boy Child of Mary"*
10am Worship in the Sanctuary
- ◇ **December 14** – 6:30pm – *Blue Christmas Service in the Sanctuary*
- ◇ **December 24** – 7pm All Age Children-friendly *Candlelight Worship Service*,
11pm *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*
- ◇ **December 25** – *Merry Christmas! He is Born!*
10am Worship – 10am in the Sanctuary



NOTES FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Kevin White

With so many activities happening at church during the Advent season, know that our music ministry is busy as well!

The Handbell Ensemble, led by Lisa Rogers, performed a beautiful piece in worship entitled "Grace and Thanksgiving." They will offer praises again in worship on December 18th! Stay tuned for "OPEN RING," which will happen in early January. This is a chance to give this ministry a try. Even if you have never rung a bell, it could be that you might be the next handbell ringer extraordinaire!

Our music program features so many gifted individuals sharing their gifts both in instrument and song! In addition to our in-house band, soloists, and choirs, we were blessed to have a UVA a capella group add to our worship experience. Christian Hoos Exalt or (CHoosE) added immensely to worship in November. We are hoping to have them return in the Spring!

The Charlottesville Cooperative Church Choir continues to regularly add to our worship. Carolyn and Kevin are so appreciative of the dedication of the 25+ strong choir. We are so blessed to have a strong complement of singers from Hinton Ave UMC!



The Magnify Choir has been rehearsing since late October and will present *That Boy Child of Mary* on December 11 at the 10am Worship service. Invite a friend or two to share in this telling of the Christmas story.

SO many musical contributions to worship are being prepared to help celebrate the joyous season of Advent and Christmas! As always...."Expect the Unexpected!" New members are always welcome! Questions? kevinwhite@cvillefirstumc.org



YOUTH PROGRAM HITTING STRIDE IN THE FALL

Dave Breslin, Youth Director

It has been a strong fall for the youth program, as we have seen Sunday Youth Group numbers increase almost on a weekly basis. In addition, we have welcomed several new kids to the program, and their presence continues to add to our unique, awesome group! This fall, the youth have served in the church's soup kitchen, have learned about Bible essentials in relation to both the Old and New Testaments, have enjoyed Sunday night fellowship gatherings at Pen Park, have taken part in bi-monthly Zoom Bible studies, and have served the community (and had quite the good time doing it!) as we helped welcome back Trunk or Treat! We also celebrated with Reese and William Coggeshall on their Confirmation which took place during the service on November 6th. Looking ahead, the youth will continue to meet weekly on Sunday mornings and our teens will join church members for the annual Advent Decorating on November 20th. A highlight of the year will continue to be our annual Christmas Eve Party on December 24th in the youth room. As we roll towards 2023, look for information on local mission's opportunities, Super Bowl Party 2023, and fun activities throughout the spring! Info? davebreslin@cvillefirstumc.org



We offer our condolences to the families of church members Harriet Wheatley, Jan Janiczek, Mike McEuen, and John Elliton as we mourn their passing. Our prayers go to Robbie and Patricia Hott in the passing of Robbie's Father.



HINTON AVENUE UMC FINANCIAL BOX SCORE

	October 2022 YTD Actual	October 2022 YTD Budget	Amt Over (Under) Budget	October 2021 YTD Actual	\$ Change
Total Income	\$109,933	---	---	\$97,853	\$12,080
Operating Expenses	\$107,203	\$130,840	(\$23,637)	\$107,773	(\$570)
Net Income (Deficit)	\$2,730	---	---	(\$9,920)	\$12,650

FUMC FINANCIAL BOX SCORE

Jeff Taylor, Finance Chairperson

	October 2022 YTD Actual	October 2022 YTD Budget	Amt Over (Under) Budget	October 2021 YTD Actual	Oct YTD Actual \$ Change from 2021
Contributions	\$466,351	\$505,083	(\$38,732)	\$416,555	\$49,796
Other Income	\$51,905	\$29,167	\$22,738	\$88,970	(\$37,065)
Total Income	\$518,256	\$534,250	(\$15,994)	\$505,525	\$12,731
Operating Expenses	\$511,232	\$521,387	(\$10,155)	\$503,210	\$8,022
Net Income (Deficit)	\$7,024	\$12,863	(\$5,839)	\$2,315	\$4,709

UPDATE ON CONSECRATION (PLEDGE) SUNDAY

To date we have received \$418,050 in pledges toward our 2023 Operating Budget which is an increase of \$60,895 or 17% over the amounts pledged toward our 2022 Operating Budget. The 17% increase for 2023 compares to \$38,000 or 12% growth in pledges from 2021 to 2022. Please note that it is not too late to pledge! Pledge cards are available for pick up throughout the rest of the year or you can pledge online on our Church Website, cvillefirstumc.org. Questions? jtaylor77cav@gmail.com

GIFT FROM THE ALICE BROWER ESTATE

First United Methodist is grateful to recognize a gift from the estate of Alice Brower in the amount of \$24,500. Estate planning is one way that your generosity continues to touch lives through the church far beyond your lifetime.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Belated congratulations to **Kathryn Mann and Brendan Dillon** who were married in our sanctuary April 23, 2022. Kathryn, the daughter of Leon and Lisa Mann, was also baptized and confirmed at First Church. The Dillons now reside in Reston, VA.



ADVENT OFFERING FOR BREAD AND BLESSINGS

Each week about 100 or more people receive a full meal from volunteers. In order to provide for food and supply costs, we are dedicating our Advent Offering which is collected on Christmas Eve, to the Bread & Blessings ministry (this was formally known as the Soup Kitchen). We invite you to give generously to this ongoing ministry which helps us love the whole city and love the city whole, starting right here.



WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT BREAD AND BLESSINGS

Every Monday our guests arrive at FUMC and are served hot meals combined with a fruit, snack, and drink from the courtyard entrance.

1. Set up serving table, prep food, serve our guests, or clean up kitchen on Mondays
2. At home prepare and package homemade cookies (2-3 average sized cookies in a baggie) to be brought to FUMC
3. Monetary donation for purchase of food. Make check payable to FUMC with Bread and Blessing in the memo line

Contact Chris Roehl at catcar24@yahoo.com.



WHAT DID ADAM SAY THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS?

.....IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE!



ASP NEEDS YOU!

Cindy Remington

First Church has participated in the Appalachian Service Project (ASP) since 2001, missing a few years in that span but always dedicated to helping make homes in Appalachia “Warmer, Safer, and Drier.”

Supervised by adult volunteers from our church family, youth travel to a site to work for families whose homes need repair, usually staying in a school facility for the week of service. In 2023, we plan to send a team to ASP at the end of June and your help is needed!

Though Charles Kidd is coordinating the effort for next summer, he needs an apprentice to step in and learn the ropes. (It isn't hard!) Here's what that means:

- ◇ Be the primary contact person for the ASP organization prior to the trip
- ◇ Ensure that payments are made in a timely manner to ASP
- ◇ Ensure that participants are trained and provide information on teams, packing requirements, and travel
- ◇ Be the major contact while at ASP and the final decision maker on any issues

Please contact Charles Kidd (charleslkidd@yahoo.com) or Cindy Poots Remington (mspoots@gmail.com) to volunteer yourself or suggest someone else who might feel called. The ASP trip is a great way to build relationships and get to know each other, and it is a lot of fun!



FIRST ANNUAL ARTS FESTIVAL!

What a fun day! With sixteen very talented vendors and scrumptious food to be purchased, the day was a resounding success! WAIT! We forgot to mention the bake sale and the rummage sale! All in all, \$2000 was raised for FUMP (First United Methodist Preschool) Did you miss it? You get another chance to join in the fun on Saturday, April 29! Save the date!



THE ONE THING MINISTRY

THE DECEMBER ONE THING

MINISTRY WILL BE COLLECTING SOCKS FOR CVILLE SOCK LOVE!

Lily and Lindsay Simpson, the Simpson sisters (!) started this successful ministry several years ago and this church family has been so generous in the past to support it wholeheartedly! Lilly says “Cville Sock Love, is collecting NEW socks in all sizes through the month of December. This ministry provides basic, warm socks to local shelters, day programs, and social service organizations, as well as socks in fun patterns for kids receiving treatment at central VA children's hospitals. New this year: you can shop from their Amazon wish list at <https://a.co/8mY2uPb> with delivery available directly to Cville Sock Love. (If you order from this list, please select the gift receipt option and write “CCCP” so they can keep track of our congregation's sock donations.) Socks can be left in the red tubs found throughout the church.

January will find us collecting hot beverage items such as coffee, tea, hot chocolate, etc. (boxes of individual packets work great!) This is a perfect gift for our friends in the cold, winter months. Please no glass containers. These items will be distributed through Loaves and Fishes.

In the month of February, our church family will have the opportunity to collect cleaning products, (i.e., rolls of toilet paper, paper towels, boxes of Kleenex, dish detergent, household cleaner, laundry detergent, bottles of bleach) to be given to clients out of the LOVE INC offices. Just FYI.....LOVE INC is “Love in the name of Christ” and is a local ministry providing assistance for folks in need in our community. Questions? carolynmcgee@cvillefirstumc.org



WHO IS NEIL MCLAUGHLIN?

Shared by Sandra McLaughlin, Neil's daughter

Neil McLaughlin was born on April 19, 1935 in Greenbank, West Virginia, to join his thirteen month old sister Ellen. His father worked for the West Virginia Department of Transportation, but in 1940, due to the election of a new governor, he had to search for new employment. He had earlier experience working on the railroads in Cass, WV and was able to get a job with the C&O Railroad working on the trains out of Charlottesville, VA. With this new job, the family moved and started attending Hinton Avenue United Methodist Church to join with the other railroad men's families that were attending. Neil primarily grew up on 10th Street NW, in a house that was later torn down to build Medical Arts Pharmacy and is now the parking garage for the new Sentera Health building. While growing up in Charlottesville he participated in numerous activities, such as Boy Scouts, delivering the morning paper from his bicycle, youth group at HAUMC, and being a part of the 8th Street gang. Kids in the City formed groups so they could play various games, like baseball, on teams. (These were groups of kids who played together vs the concept of modern gangs.) There was the Belmont Boys, the Fifeville gang, the Ruby Road group, and the downtown kids were in the 8th Street gang. He often said it is a wonder they survived the competition and the arguments over missed calls of balls and strikes!

Neil and his sister attended McGuffey Elementary and then Lane High School. They both told stories about roller skating to school and riding their bikes. They also played Capture the Flag in Lee Park (now Market Street Park) after school. In the summers they stayed with their grandmother and their aunts in Brandywine, WV. During this time Neil developed his lifelong hobbies. He started hunting with his father, fishing with his uncle and wood working in Mr. Poole's Industrial Arts class. In high school Neil played football, ran track, built sets for the drama productions and developed an interest in building Early American style furniture. After high school he realized he needed to fulfill his military service and signed up for the US Army. Even though Neil trained to go to Korea, in the long run he was stationed in Japan. While in the military he decided to explore the areas surrounding the various bases where he was stationed. He can still count, say hello, and ask for directions in Japanese! (ask him!) Even though military life had its perks, he decided to make his mother happy and return home, where he started working at

Sperry Marine and continued to work there until he retired 39 years later.

In 1960, he married Darlene Kiser from Sugar Grove, WV and the youth group he had grown up in at Hinton Ave became the Young Adult Fellowship Class. Along the way they dropped the "young" part (!) but stayed together as a class until recent years. Neil's father encouraged him to participate in the Methodist Men and asked him to become the treasurer, due to all the previous treasurers passing away. Little did he know that he would keep that job from 1958 to approximately 2018, a mere 60 years! Along the way Neil's two daughters, Gail and Sandra, were born. They enjoyed family trips fishing, camping, spending time with family in

WV, going to amusement parks, and visiting the beach. Neil, good naturally, attended numerous band concerts, piano recitals, chaperoned CHS band trips, and endured being the only male in the household, where he did not have veto power. Around 1972, due to the Methodist Men sponsoring the Boy Scout troop at HAUMC, he started working with Troop 37. This continued his lifelong involvement in Scouts that included being the Scoutmaster of Troop 37, serving on District boards, taking groups to Philmont High Adventure Camp in Cimarron, NM, planning and directing 30 Apple



Neil and Sandra McLaughlin at a Hinton Ave. UMC picnic at Pen Park (of course, it rained!)

Harvest Camporees, numerous Spring Hiking Camporees, attending National Jamborees, and directing the local Boy Scout Christmas Tree sales. He reached the adult rank of Wood Badge, which is the highest level of Leadership available in the BSA.

During his retirement years Neil has greatly enjoyed his role as Granddad to his grandson Carter. They have spent hours together building stuff in the basement shop, going camping, fishing, and on adventures. He was truly excited to serve as Carter's mentor in Scouting and helped to encourage him to become an Eagle Scout. Even though health complications have slowed him down in recent years, he still enjoys sitting on the porch of his little West Virginia house, spending time with his family, and telling stories about growing up in Charlottesville. He currently resides at The Blake and welcomes old and new friends.

Be sure to welcome and meet Neil McLaughlin.....and Sandra too!



FUN IN THE PRESCHOOL

Kristen Breslin, Preschool Director

This fall at First United Methodist Preschool we have been super busy! The children have been learning how to share and how to be kind, all while learning our letters, learning to read, math, and so much more. We were so excited to have the Charlottesville Fire Department come and teach us all about what to do if there is ever a fire. We also had an amazing opportunity to have the Free Book Bus come and each FUMP child got to pick out a free book to take home! Many of the children participated in the church Trunk or Treat event and we also went Trick or Treating to all the church staff offices before we gathered and sang our Halloween songs! Thank you to all for your support of the Preschool "Attractions" fundraiser and for your participation in the Fall Arts Festival which was a benefit to support FUMP! We have been so blessed! Info fump@cvillefirstumc.org.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT?

Lara Upton, Children's Director

Lots to report from our youngest members! Our nursery is back in full force and in a spruced up space! Stop by to see our newly painted, calm green walls and meet Erika and Jane, our Nursery Attendants. Older preschoolers, children, and Tweens also have a new space on the third floor! Every Sunday after the 10am worship service the children have a chance to visit the "Just for Kids" table at our Portico Café. The first Sunday of every month the children, along with their adults and families, are invited to lunch and crafts in the Fellowship Hall. In December, there will be a birthday party for Jesus! This past October the Children and Youth Ministries hosted a Trunk or Treat evening for the community. It was a well-attended and FUN evening! Info about the FUMC Children's Department - children@cvillefirstumc.org.



NEED A NAMETAG? CONTACT CAROLYNMCGEE@CVILLEFIRSTUMC.ORG

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