



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF PINEHURST

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Dear Friends,

The start of the Lenten season marks the beginning of the end of winter. So it's a perfect time to mark what we as a congregation have accomplished over the last several months. It is also a time to look forward to the joys of spring and the challenges that we embrace as a community of faith.

This winter your Council reviewed the church's team structure in order to clarify expectations and minimize the duplication of effort. It also seemed important to examine areas in our church life needing more attention. This work resulted in a restructuring of the Fellowship/Member Care team. The newly named Community Life Team will now consist of sub-groups: Fellowship, Member Care, and Outreach. Katherine Stevenson is shepherding this change and would welcome those that might be interested in filling some of the small, but important duties that are now under the umbrella of the CLT.

The Mission, Peace and Justice team is actively involved in our community, state and national concerns. There are those within our congregation who have answered a personal call to demonstrate their concerns for justice issues at Moral Mondays. If this does not resonate with you, programs on environmental issues, race relations, and book studies offer a forum for sharing our thoughts and questions on a variety of difficult issues. Next up in our sanctuary will be a visit from the Reverend Dr. William Barber, co-sponsored by the Moore County NAACP, to be held March 28th at 6:30PM.

Our building has seen lots of traffic over the last several months. A chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Friday nights and Sunday afternoons. The Buddhist Sangha community also meets on Sundays in the late afternoon. Later this spring, a newly formed congregation of the Ecumenical Catholic Church will begin renting our sanctuary on Saturday evenings. There is something satisfying about a "full house"!

Continuing our commitment to the environment, the Council created a "wish list" of non-budgeted items that would help us save money and lessen our carbon footprint. We are delighted to report that through generous gifts we purchased a composter that has been assembled and will soon be available for use. Check the kitchen for instructions on how to compost whenever you are using the church facility. We have also installed programmable "smart" thermostats. No more worries about pushing the heat up or remembering to reset it after using the facility. And finally, we will be removing the old water tanks and replacing them with tankless water heaters. There will be more room in the closets and less energy waste! The lights in the sanctuary are 90% LED and repairs to the outlets and problematic dimmer switches have been replaced. Many thanks to all who have given so generously towards these improvements.

Greg Stivland and Andrea Flagg are developing plans for a community garden. The hope is that the produce will be shared with people and programs in the area that could benefit from fresh, healthy food. Stay tuned for a presentation from these two outlining the project and sharing how you can be a part of this exciting initiative!

Last fall the Council appointed a special ad hoc group charged with Long-Range Planning. Tim Maroney is chairing the committee and is helped by Greg Stivland, Linda Stout and Mark Royalty. The work has focused on three areas:

- Opportunities and benefits for restructuring the debt of the congregation to ensure long-term solvency.
- Developing and implementing a planned giving program to create ongoing passive income.
- Building maintenance and upgrades for the purpose of identifying non-operational financial requirements and funding needs, as well as supporting a long term “green” conversion of existing energy use.

Tim and his group will be presenting the details of their work later in the spring.

The Council is responsible for the fiscal health of the church, but each member is part of the larger family. So we determined it was important that the membership be kept abreast of the annual budget figures as we enter the last quarter of the year. The base line figures are now printed in the bulletin each Sunday. You may have noticed that we are running a projected deficit of \$3,000-\$5,000 for the year. These figures are based on the monthly pledged amounts given so far and then compared to a monthly figure of the entire budget amount divided by twelve. John Kelly has done a masterful job of finding ways to save on many line items, but there are many other lines that cannot be reduced. The Council will address this concern at its next meeting. If you have ideas you want to pass along to the Council please speak with me, or send an email to any Council member. The pledge season for the new year is almost upon us and the Stewardship committee will begin its work in the next several weeks for the 2014-15 year. We would welcome volunteers to serve on this very important team.

We have much for which we are thankful. The celebration of our life together included John Carsten’s memorial service, Cindy Myrick and Linda Lyons marriage blessing, and a baby shower for Roland and Linda Stout’s new grandchild (and Joelle Stout’s niece). A newly formed Caregivers Group is training to be an instrumental part of our member care/visitation efforts. And of course we look forward to Brent’s opportunity to take a sabbatical commencing in June. On June 9th we will have a special celebration as we prepare for the time apart. We look forward to Reverend Sarah Edwards and Reverend Ray Morris stepping into the pulpit to cover the time Brent is away.

I am grateful for all that we do and all that we dream. So find a spot for yourself in this extraordinary family of faith.

Blessings,

Kathy Nekton Council Chair
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Important dates:

- March 16th-congregational meeting to vote to appoint Roger Nekton as Chair of the Nominating Committee
- June 1st-Annual Meeting