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# ◆ The Congregational Connection ◆

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Volume 74, Issue 1

March 2024

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April 5th, 1895



Pastor Michael C. Dubbs

## Pastor's Message

### Community

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25

That is one of the verses you'll find if you search for 'Bible verses about Community'.

Community is in our name, and we are located smack in the middle of town. So how do we emphasize “Community”.



We are home to BSA Scout Troop #1. They recently participated in Scout Sunday, during which they presented the Colors and served as greeters. They provided the snacks for the fellowship time after the 11:00 service. The Scouts also did a food drive in which they collected over 100 pounds of food that the Church gave to the Food Bank.

Speaking of Food Bank! Each Sunday we collect food for the Food Bank and for Backpack Pals. Backpack Pals is a program for our local school children. We collect single serving packages of raisins, fruit cups, peanut butter crackers, mac and cheese, etc. Collection baskets are at the back of the Sanctuary.

We emphasize Community when we invite our friends, our neighbors, even strangers to come to church. We emphasize Community when we welcome those who

visit us. We emphasize Community when our focus is outward, looking to help and serve others in our greater Community.

Community is who we are! We are Community Congregational Church. Let's look for more ways to serve our Community.

### Youth

It's the new goal of our youth advisory to have at least one Youth announcement in every bulletin. That way, if a family with kids visits, they see something on the horizon for the kids. The most recent event was the Scavenger Hunt which was a combination of learning about the church and just plain fun! There were balloons popping, and searches through Bibles and Hymnals for clues. A good time was had by kids of all ages, including several adults who played along.

Blessings,  
Pastor Mike



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“The mission of The Community Congregational Church is to be a place to praise the Lord through Christian teaching, fellowship, and outreach.”

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*March*

John Newton	03/01
Daniel Newton	03/01
Beth McSwain	03/06
Anne Dorsey	03/12
Nicholas Campbell	03/14
David Page	03/16
Sandra Coman	03/19
Brent Shockley	03/25
Ginger Rolfe	03/25
Robin Lynne Frye	03/25
Abby David	03/27

*April*

Kris Cameron	04/05
Sandy Dana	04/06
Stephen Dana	04/07
Michael Harris	04/08
Dick Strine	04/09
Richard Dana	04/10
Peter Mattingly	04/10
Lucy Miller	04/12
Catherine Scott	04/20
Molli Pottle	04/20
Mike McInnis	04/21
Judy Page	04/22
Jonathan Hall	04/23
Michael Kline	04/23
Madeleine Katavolos	04/30

*May*

Jackie Boreliz	05/05
Audrey Summers	05/06
Marjean Campbell	05/07
Carol Coates	05/08
Kelly Davis	05/12
Melinda Summers	05/12
Anne Ryder	05/16
Jake McSwain	05/16
Robert Coates	05/17
Lynne McSwain	05/17
Barbara Hall	05/19
Nicolas Cameron	05/20
Suzanne LaFollett-Black	05/21
Charlotte Gallagher	05/21
Kileigh Cameron	05/22
Cathy Dawson	05/23
Rob Harding	05/29

*Congratulations*



Shelton and Sally Raynor celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on December 22<sup>nd</sup> with a surprise party which included over 100 guests. The party was hosted by their children, Rebecca and Mathew, with lots of help from family and friends.



Pastor Mike with Carolyn Buchan. Carolyn is 94 years young and has been a member of this Church since 1948. Carolyn is one of the ladies who with the Women's Fellowship in 1981 helped make this quilt for Reverend Mike Garber to commemorate the 15th anniversary of his Ordination. With Mike's passing, his family returned the quilt to the Church where it will be displayed for all to see!

## Men's Fellowship Breakfast

The Men's Fellowship prepared a wonderful breakfast for the congregation as part of this year's Annual Meeting which was held on January 28th. Participating Chefs included Rob Harding, Randy Spaciel and Steven Hodges. Stassie Hodges, also pictured below, provided invaluable supervision.



## Chili/Soup Cook-Off



And the winners are ... Ann Shields for her 'Ann's Sunday Chili', Pastor Mike-Head Cheerleader, Jean Spaciel and Natalie Richardson tied for the 'Kids Choice' award and Kelly Harding for her New England Clam Chowder. It was all wonderful!



## Scout Sunday - Scout Troop #1



During a recent Children's Message, Pastor Mike shares the lesson about Jesus telling the disciples and us to be Fishers of Men.



Watching TV I came across a program hosted by Betty and James Robinson who have made it a lifelong mission to help children in crisis. They showed children having to drink water that is contaminated by mud and animal droppings just to quench their thirst. It showed the heartbreak and sorrow that mothers go through helplessly seeing their child die.

Our bible class decided to help bring clean water wherever it is needed by donations every week. We collected over \$247 and a check has been sent to help toward the drilling for water, water filters and treatment systems.

Take time out to thank God for the water we can drink at any time and think of the ones who can't.

"Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst." John 4:14

God Bless ~ from our Bible class

~ Submitted by Ingrid Leeper ~

## HONEY LEMON BARS

Courtesy of Linda Dreher

1 cup flour  
 ¼ cup powdered sugar  
 ¾ cup butter, cut up

Mix flour & sugar, cut butter in until mixture resembles coarse crumbs; press into lightly greased 8X8 glass pan. Bake at 350 12 to 15 minutes until lightly brown; remove a let stand 5 mins.

¾ cup honey  
 3 eggs  
 Whisk honey and eggs.

Add and mix until blended:

2 Tbl flour  
 ½ tsp baking powder  
 ¼ tsp salt  
 Zest from one lemon

3 Tbl fresh squeezed lemon juice  
 Pour over baked crust; bake at 350 25 to 30 minutes until filling is set (cover with foil last 5 minutes if getting too brown) Cool on wire rack; cut into squares. For gluten free, substitute almond and/or coconut flour; add 1 Tbl arrowroot starch.

Enjoy!



### *Congratulations, Shelton!*

On January 20, 2024, Shelton Raynor was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame at Sandhills Community College. Shelton served in the Army after high school and was asked by his younger brother Andy to consider coming to Southern Pines to further his education and to play on the SCC baseball team. Shelton starred on the baseball team at Sandhills and continued to play semi-professional baseball for Southern Pines. He also played locally for the "Sand Gnats" and did not retire from actively playing until the age of 62. Shelton started his own surveying business in 1978. He has been active in our community, helping start the Optimist Club of the Sandhills and the Sandhills Academy of Gymnastics. Shelton is the product of outstanding teachers, is a lifelong learner and loves his family, church, and community that he faithfully serves.



## To My Church Family

Since my car accident totaling my car, I'm depending on others to take me to and from Church, grocery shopping, etc. So many people have offered their help (and God knows who you are.)

I'm so grateful to have such good people around me. Words cannot express my love for all of you. I have a feeling God is pleased!

God Bless you all,  
~ Ingrid ~

**Anyone can show up when you're happy. But the ones who stay by your side when your heart falls apart, they are your true friends."**



## Today's Joke from Bill Shockley!

A man was driving on a familiar highway when all of a sudden he had to swerve to avoid a box falling off the back of the truck in front of him. Seconds later, a policeman pulled him over for reckless driving.

As the officer was writing out the ticket, the driver noticed that the box he avoided had been full of nails and tacks. "I had to swerve, or I'd have run over that stuff and blown my tires!"

"OK," replied the officer, tearing up the ticket. "But I'm now going to take you in." "What for?" asked the man. Said the officer, "Tacks evasion."



## SCHOLARSHIPS

The purpose of establishing a Scholarship Program is to recognize individual effort, achievement and need, by providing financial assistance to attend accredited institutions of higher learning as part of the church's Outreach Program of Ministry to the Community. Funding comes from the Scholarship segment of the Endowment Fund, supplemented by other sources of funds as required.

The church awards four \$1,000.00 scholarships and one \$1,000.00 scholarship to Elon University. Students applying for a scholarship must have attended high school in Moore County and be sponsored by a church member. When applying they must submit the scholarship form accompanied by an essay, a transcript, two recommendations and a member recommendation. The date for applications to be returned to the church is April 3, 2024. Applications can be picked up now in the church office.

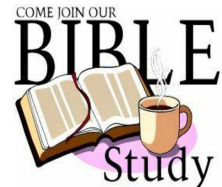
## In Memory of the Savior's Love by Thomas Cotterill

In memory of the Savior's love  
We keep the sacred feast.  
Where every humble, contrite heart  
Is made a welcome guest.

By faith we take the bread of life  
With which our souls are fed.  
The cup in token of his blood  
That was for sinners shed.

In faith and memory thus we sing  
The wonders of his love,  
And thus anticipate by faith  
The heavenly feast above.

~ Submitted by Rose Bowers ~



## Women of the Bible

Starting in March, our Bible Study group will be studying the Women of Bible. Feel welcome to join us every Tuesday at 10:00am. We'll be happy to make more coffee!

Trivia: Who are the only four (4) women mentioned by name in the lineage of Jesus?

## Did you know that:

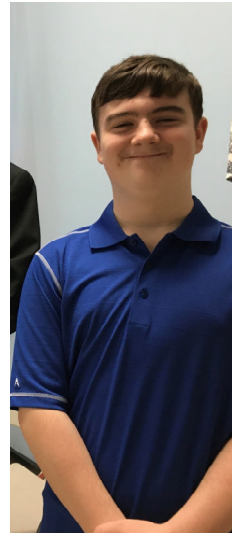
- Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?
- Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible?
- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible?
- The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118.
- If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters. 1188 or Psalm 118 verse 8 is the middle verse of the entire Bible.
- Should the central verse not have any important message?
- "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man." (Psalm 118:8)

## Youth Highlights



### Raegen Boan -

Raegen is in 7th grade and attends Moore Connect Virtual Academy. Her favorite subjects are English and Math. She loves playing soccer and plays for the Carolina Velocity Soccer Club. Raegen also loves playing the piano and guitar. One of her favorite hobbies is photography and she enjoys taking photographs of anything she can find. Raegen has recently delighted our congregation by playing her guitar and singing during our church services. Thank you for sharing your talents with us, Raegen!



### Thomas Hall -

Thomas is in 9th grade and attends the Connect Virtual Academy where he will participate in Kickball starting in March. Thomas is looking forward to going to Disney World and going to New Jersey to visit family this summer.



### Macey Jackson -

Macey is 16 and got her Driver's License this past August. Macy is just now beginning a new softball season and has recently completed her first semester with all A's at Grace Christian High School. Macey has enjoyed being a tutor in a first grade class at Grace Christian Elementary School.

She also gets up to participate in 6 a.m. workouts! Way to go, Macey!



### Kileigh Cameron -

Kileigh has just finished a season of Winter Track where she participated in the shot put event. She will now move into softball season, playing for Union Pines High School. Kileigh also finished her first semester of 10th grade with all A's. Kileigh thoroughly enjoyed her opportunity to participate in a job shadowing experience at First-Health Moore Regional Hospital where she observed in the Radiology Department. With her interest in a career in healthcare, she hopes to continue to job shadow in a variety of healthcare environments in the future.

### Paul Dana -

Paul is over halfway through 7th grade and he is looking forward to spring break that is coming up the first two weeks of March. Pre-Algebra is his favorite subject in school with Logic coming in a close second. Paul enjoys hanging out with his friends when he is not at school. And, he loves playing video games too. Paul is pictured after catching this "beauty" in a lake up near the Virginia/North Carolina border. What a catch, Paul!



"You'll never achieve the goals you don't set."

## Other Youth News

### Nursery:

Our nursery is available during the 11:00 service each Sunday for infants and children up to age 6. Children may go to the nursery immediately after the Children's Message. Our nursery is located downstairs in the church.

### Sunday School:

Sunday School is offered each Sunday at 10:15-11:00 for students ages 7 and up. The Sunday School class is located downstairs in the first room on the left at the bottom of the stairs. Please invite anyone you know to come and join our Sunday School each Sunday.

### Youth Activities:

Youth who are ages 12 and up are encouraged to attend our Youth Activities. (This also includes those of you who are young at heart!)

Youth Activities take place following the 11:00 worship service.

Tentative Youth Activity dates and events are as follows:

- \* March 17 - Escape Room adventure. The 'Escape Room' is located in the building at the end of our church parking lot.
- \* April 14 - Bowling at Sandhills Bowling Center in Pinehurst.
- \* May 5 - Cinco-de-Mayo Bunch for Lunch sponsored by the Youth. All congregation and visitors are welcome to come and eat Mexican cuisine furnished and served by the Youth and the Board of Christian Education members. After the Bunch for Lunch, Youth will participate in a miniature golf adventure.
- \* June 2 - Youth Day - Youth will participate in the worship service(s). Then, after the 11:00 worship service, they will enjoy a picnic lunch and a hike led by Ginger Rolfe.



An Elementary School Teacher presented the children in her classroom the first half of a well-known proverb and asked them to come up with the remainder of the proverb. It's hard to believe these were actually done by first graders.

It's Always darkest before ... "Daylight Savings Time"

Don't Bite the Hand that ... "Looks Dirty"

You Can't Teach an Old Dog ... "New Math"

A Penny Saved is ... "Not Much!"

Two's Company, Three's ... "The Musketeers"

Children Should be Seen and Not ... "Spanked or Grounded"

If at First You Don't Succeed ... "Get New Batteries"

When the Blind lead the Blind ... "Get Out of the Way!"





**Music is Alive and Well at CCC!**

We have two musical delights coming up in March and April. First is the special music we have planned for our 11:00 AM Easter service on March 31st. James Miller, who played the trumpet so beautifully for us last Easter, will join us again to play on two choral anthems - *Lift High the Cross* and *Thou Art the King of Glory* - and on one of our hymns, *Christ the Lord is Risen Today*. Baritone Robert Mobsby will be the soloist on *Thou Art the King of Glory*. There will also be a thrilling and joyous organ postlude. You won't want to miss this most sacred day in our church year.

Come and worship in person with us and enjoy the gorgeous Easter lilies and festive music!



Our Community Congregational Concerts series was begun with the intention of providing fine music which would raise the awareness of CCC in our community and help grow our membership. The series, which started in October with "An Afternoon of Opera Favorites" and continued in January with an organ recital, "Something Old, Something New: Organ Music of the 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Centuries," continues with a concert by the Pembroke Singers on Sunday, April 21st at 4:00 PM. As the select chamber choir

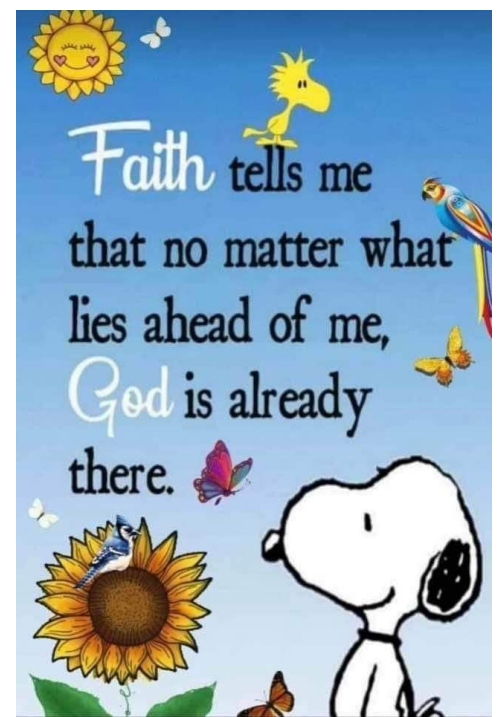
of UNC-Pembroke, the group has sung on international concert tours, performed recently at Duke Chapel and will soon sing at Carnegie Hall. Husband-and-wife team Dr. Jaeyoon Kim and Dr. Seung Ah Kim are the group's director and piano accompanist, respectively. The program will feature a variety of choral repertoire from Renaissance to contemporary composed by Bach, Handel, and many others, including some Spanish selections. Tickets for this event are \$20, and members of the congregation may purchase them at the door. Please help support this important outreach ministry of our church!



Members of the Congregation attended 'Faith & Family Night' in support of the Fayetteville Marksmen Hockey Team at the Crown Coliseum



What an enthusiastic group! Can you spot Mike Harris?





# Psalm 27:13-14

Q Q M K Y E Y T W L R N  
 Y D R O L V G H E A R T  
 Z Z X T P E D A L Z I J  
 L Q B J Z I Q M R G L T  
 E I Y Q G L T K O U G T  
 Y E V D M E L O L N O R  
 D W S I D B D L O Y V C  
 N T E N N N N R A D Y R  
 A R Z K E G T L L H Q B  
 L W K S A S T R Y V S Z  
 L W S L Z T T X W D Q T

*I believe that I shall see the goodness of  
 the Lord  
 in the land of the living.  
 Wait for the Lord;  
 be strong, and let your heart take  
 courage;  
 wait for the Lord!*

BELIEVE	LIVING
SHALL	WAIT
SEE	STRONG
GOODNESS	HEART
LORD	TAKE
LAND	COURAGE

## Habits of the Household: What Is Your Normal?

Today's inspiration comes from:

**Habits of the Household**

by Justin Whitmel Earley

It's a hard question to answer, because normal things are usually the invisible things. Your everyday habits are precisely the habits you don't notice. That is, until a crisis reveals them.

It was a kids' bedtime that first revealed to me my normal as a dad. A few years ago, I was putting my four boys to bed, and everything was going the way it always did. There was bathwater everywhere. The boys were escaping bath and wrestling on the floor of their room. I was shouting orders with increasing volume. No one was listening. I threatened severe bodily harm if teeth were not brushed. It didn't really work. I finally muscled everyone into bed, turned off the lights, murmured something about I love you and God does too, and then closed the door. Standing in the hallway that night, the Holy Spirit suddenly revealed something to me: ***This is your normal.***

Like all moments of grace, it was at first startling. It was convicting. Standing in the hallway with one hand on the doorknob of the boys room, I realized that it was totally normal for me to yell and shout my kids to bed. My evening routine was a liturgy of anger and frustration. Again, like all moments of grace, I suddenly realized I should change that. A few weeks later after sharing this with one of my pastors, he gave me the idea to try a "bedtime liturgy" with my boys as a way to shake up my bedtime routine. Following is what I wrote.

### A BEDTIME BLESSING OF GOSPEL LOVE

Parent: Do you know that I love You?

Child: Yes

Parent" Do you know that I love you no matter what good things you do?

Child: Yes

Parent" Do you know that I love you no matter what bad things you do?

Child: Yes

Parent: Who else loves you like that?

Child: God does.

Parent: Even more than me?

Child: Yes

Parent: Rest in that love.

The first time I did this, it was not smooth. At first, I forgot what I was going to say. When I asked if they knew I loved them no matter what bad things they do, they were confident the answer was, "No. You clearly do not." We had a lot of work to do, but at least by that time in my parenting career, I knew that nothing is normal until it is. A good parent perseveres with a habit.

Then came a night a few weeks later where one of my sons, laying in bed, asked if they could have their nighttime blessing. We exchanged these words of God's unconditional love for us, no matter how our behavior went, and I shut the door and had another moment hallway reflection. Nothing about my circumstances had changed. The boys were still little children that got a lot of bathwater on the floor again. They still fought over the toothbrushes. They still had trouble listening. But I was different. I was no longer driving the night towards a moment where I could shut the door and say goodnight, I was driving towards a moment when we could talk about how we are loved by God no matter what.

I realized that is the power of a good parenting habit.

By changing our knee-jerk reaction to ordinary circumstances, God opens up new pathways of grace to guide our hearts, and our children's hearts, into new patterns of life together.

***We all have habits. Why not try to let the Lord reshape them into new normals?***

## The Spiritual Power of Habit

Soon I began to see this everywhere.

Habits are the things that shape us even when we don't notice it. That's why they are so powerful. Christians have a spiritual word for this, we call it "liturgy." Liturgies are the patterns of worship we do over and over, semi-consciously to unconsciously, because we want to be shaped in the image of the God who loves us.

But notice how similar habits and liturgies are. They are both things that we do over and over, semi-consciously to unconsciously, and they both shape up. The only difference is that liturgy "admits" that it is centered around worship. Our daily habits often obscure what we worship, but that of course doesn't mean we're not worshipping something.

We were created by God to be people of worship. We can't help but worship. So the question is not *whether* we're worshipping in our daily habits, the question is just "What are we worshipping?"

## Habits of the Household

Here is a thought for you: "*We become our habits, and our kids become us.*" If that has any truth to it, then our habits of the household are one of the most significant parts of our children's spiritual formation. And usually, we don't pay any attention to it!

After my bedtime fiasco of realizing my "normal," I started to think about this everywhere. *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms* is what came out of those years of reflection.

My boys are still quite little. We have four of them, from pre-school to middle-school, and if you came into our house you would find it as messy and loud as any house. However, I hope you would also notice some rhythms that to us, have become normal. And yet, they shape our days in powerfully spiritual ways.

They are all little things: We begin dinner by lighting a candle and proclaiming "Christ is light." It's a small way to call kids to dinner (as it turns out they like fire) but a big way to shape their theological imagination in the truth that Christ animates all of existence.

Before leaving for school in the morning, we pause at the door and all recite a sending prayer: "Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thank You for this day. Bless us as we work, study, and pray. Be present with us, in all we do, may we bring glory and honor to You." It's simple and short, it even rhymes a little. But it's a way to make our moment before school a little less of a rush, and a little more of a missional moment where we all walk out into the world to glorify God.

After discipline, we have liturgies of saying, "I'm sorry," "I forgive you," and then hugging to reconcile. This has been a really important one for us, as I'm confident my boys and I get more opportunities to apologize and reconcile than most. But it's a wonderful way to remember that conflict amongst sinners is not unusual. What's unusual is forgiveness and reconciliation.

## Letting God Make "New Normals"

All of these things are little, and yet the Lord has used all of them to reshape our day to day interactions in meaningful ways. We all have habits. Why not try to let the Lord reshape them into new normals?

But remember this: Habits won't change God's love for us. But God's love for us should change our habits.

~ Contributed by Sandy Dana ~



# The Community Congregational Church

United Church of Christ, Inc.  
P.O. Box 62  
Southern Pines, NC 28388-0062  
"The Church of Wide Fellowship"



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Office 910-692-8468  
Church Fax 910-692-8468  
e-mail: [cccpnc@outlook.com](mailto:cccpnc@outlook.com)  
[www.communitycongregational.org](http://www.communitycongregational.org)

**Community Congregational Church**  
141 N. Bennett Street, Southern Pines, NC 28387

	<u>Sunday Worship Services</u> 9:00 am and 11:00 am	
	<u>Sunday Bible Study</u> 10:00 am	



The Community Congregational Church,  
UCC  
Established in 1895

## Weekly Calendar

- Sundays:** Worship Services - 9 am and 11 am  
Adult Bible Study - 10 am - Bill Shockley, Moderator  
Youth Sunday School (Ages 7 & up) - 10:15-11:00 am
- Mondays:** 1st Monday - Deacons Meeting - 5:30 pm  
2nd Monday - Trustees Meeting - 6:00 pm  
3rd Monday - Church Council - 6:00 pm
- Tuesdays:** Bible Study - 10 am - Pastor Mike, Women of the Bible
- Wednesdays:** Choir Rehearsal - 7 pm  
2nd Wednesday - Women's Fellowship - 12:00 noon Sept-May  
4th Wednesday - Prayer Shawl Group - 10:00 am

*Our newsletter will be interesting & helpful to our congregation, if YOU help us make it so! Call the church office with your news.*