
The Congregational Connection

Volume 75, Issue 1

March, 2025



April 5th, 1895

Pastor's Message

One of my favorite Three Stooges episodes is entitled:

A Plumbing We Will Go!

In this episode, the boys are running from the police and they hide out in a well-to-do house pretending to be plumbers. They mess up the whole house plumbing and electric systems. The well-to-do folks have one of the first television sets, and they gather around to witness the wonder of moving images on the TV. The video shows Niagara Falls and as they marvel at the moving images, water comes gushing out of the TV!



What in the world does this have to do with our church or this newsletter?

Well, a funny thing happened on the way to Sunday's youth event!

We were watching a movie called *Heaven is For Real*. It's a great movie and the lead character is a pastor, who is also a firefighter. Everything was going fine until Pastor Mike tried to make popcorn!!! The popcorn machine created enough smoke to set off the fire alarm, and while watching a movie about fire fighters, actual fire fighters come storming into the church!



Pastor Michael C. Dubbs

The whole scene reminded me of the aforementioned Three Stooges episode.

The good news is that we know the smoke alarms work, and I thanked the kids for participating in the annual fire drill! The kids actually never missed a beat!

We knew there was no fire even though the alarm system was telling us there was a fire, and we should all exit the building. The kids just turned on the closed captions and continued to watch the movie with the alarm going off!



I don't think anyone in attendance will ever forget Sunday's "Movie Night!"

Ever the Optimist!

During Pastor Mike’s children’s sermon on Sunday, Feb. 9th, he asked the kids who played sports how they felt when they lost a game or won a game. They, of course, responded that they were upset when they lost and happy when they won. It reminded me of a story about my son.

My youngest son, Jon, was 8 or 9 years old when he was playing on a little league team that was really taking a beating. They had lost every game by several runs and the season was almost over.

I took him to a game one evening - it was one of his last - but was unable to stay. My husband was out of town and I had something I had to do with one of Jon’s sisters. I wished him good luck and told him I would get back just as soon as I could; hopefully, before the game was over.

When I was able to get back to the game, it had, unfortunately, just ended. I felt really bad, but then Jon came running out to the car, very excited, throwing his glove up in the air and spinning around and catching it. “Oh, no”, I thought, “they finally won a game and we were not here to see it”. I put the window down and yelled out “Jon, did you win”? “No”, he yelled back, “but we only lost by two”!!

~ Nancy Cameron ~



Prayer

Thank you, God, for your kindness,
You saw our pain and our aches,
You are full of love and grace,
Brought us together in one place.

Help us Lord to grow in your love,
As we enjoy each other with praise,
We submit ourselves to you Lord,
Fill us with more love and grace.

Lord, we promise to serve you,
Put you first in every way,
We need you to lead us through,
As we pass this journey, our break-through.

Amen

~ Natalie Dauner ~



“What the World Sees”

On February 16th our 11am service was streamed by a Facebook follower in Bangladesh. Great, Huh! But whoever watched on Facebook that day saw a nearly empty church. Our camera on the widest setting only shows the front 8 or 9 rows and those rows are mostly unused. True, we are probably not going to be streamed in Bangladesh on a regular basis, but our neighbors who might tune in to see our service see the same thing.

Nobody is going to tell you where to sit, but how we are seen might be something to think about when choosing where you sit during the service. As a Congregational Church, we are totally self governed and are fully responsible for how and if we prosper as a Church.



Where you chose to sit may have more impact than you know.

~ Joe Shields ~

Youth Highlights

The Board of Christian Education and the youth of our church sincerely appreciate all who supported the youth by participating in the recent iHOP day! The money generated through this outstanding fundraiser will provide additional opportunities that may not have been possible without your generous support! Thank you!



Each of our church youth is independently and wonderfully talented! They are genuine, kind, caring, smart and fun to be around! Each of our youth gracefully and successfully manages a variety of activities other than their school responsibilities. They are successful in sports, drama and debate. They are a bless-

ing to our church! Each member will be enlightened if you are able to spend time talking to any and all of our youth!

Sunday School meets each Sunday at 10:15-10:50. Lessons began the year based on Old Testament stories until Christmas. At that time, the focus changed to Jesus' birth and the youth presented a short play entitled, "The New Star" during the 11:00 worship service. Since the New Year, lessons have followed the life of Jesus Christ and his ministry. If anyone would ever like to come share stories or lessons during the Sunday School time, please feel free to contact a member of the Board of Christian Education.

Youth Fellowship activities take place once per month. The January activity was the tremendously successful iHOP fundraiser. February's activity included a movie afternoon complete with pizza and popcorn. The activity in

March will be a wonderful surprise planned by Pastor Mike. **All youth and** all of our congregation who are "**young at heart**" are always welcome and encouraged to participate. The March activity date will be announced in future church bulletins.

The youth also would like to remind everyone of the "**Acts of Random Kindness**" (ARK) that is located in the hall, just outside of the sanctuary. Please stop and choose a slip of paper to take with you as you leave the church each week.



Abriana (Abri) Chiapperino

Abriana is thriving as a 6th grader at STARS Charter School and continues to pursue her passion for theater. This month, she will take the stage as 'Alice' in STARS' production of "Matilda Jr." She is looking ahead to the summer when Abriana will be performing in "Seussical Jr." at the Encore Center.

Abriana is also excited to start volleyball camp. Outside of theater, Abriana is honing her skills in jazz and modern dance classes at STARS. When she isn't dancing or preparing for her next performance, Abriana stays focused on her academic goals and is currently preparing for her induction into the National Junior Honor Society.



Nico Chiapperino

Nico is enjoying his 4th grade year at STARS Charter School and continues to pursue his passion for sports. As his basketball season comes to a close, he has excelled on the court, even playing alongside older kids and holding his own. He's now gearing up for the spring season with his Select Baseball team,

marking his 3rd year with the program. Recently, Nico has developed an interest in collecting baseball cards and has become quite the expert on current and past MLB players, their teams, and stats. He's also looking forward to this summer when the Sandhills Bogeys return, especially with his family hosting two of the players who will act as his "big brothers".

Youth Highlights ~ cont'd



Josie Jawanda

Josie Jawanda is a senior at Pinecrest High School. She is also on the Speech and Debate team and her event this year has been Congressional Debate. HOSA, Science Olympiad and Sustainable Fashion are other clubs she is involved with. She has been on Pinecrest's swim team the past two years. Josie enjoys travel and food, and hopes to do a semester abroad. She will enter UNC Chapel Hill in the fall with a major in Nursing.



Jethro (Jet) Jawanda

Jethro (Jet) Jawanda is a freshman at Pinecrest High School. He is kept very busy as a member of the Speech and Debate team; his event is Public Forum Debate. Other clubs he participates in are HOSA (Health Occupations Student Association) and Science Olympiad. He is also on the Tennis team. Outside of school he enjoys video games, watching sports and hanging out with friends.



Macey Jackson

The basketball season at North Moore High School has just ended. Macey is looking very forward to her senior year of softball beginning! At the same time, Macey is also looking to her future graduation and getting to know her college softball teammates at NC Wesleyan College.



Raegen Boan

Raegen is an 8th grade student finishing this year with Moore County Connect Virtual Academy and plans to attend Union Pines High School in the fall. She continues to play travel soccer in Raleigh with the Carolina Velocity Soccer Club. In her spare time she enjoys cooking and spending time with her dogs Max and Bella. She is looking forward to her first Shakespeare production with Temple theater this summer!



Kileigh Cameron

Kileigh is still enjoying continuing her weekly volunteering experience at FirstHealth! She also has just completed her Union Pines High School Track and Field season with the winning title of 2nd Place in the Conference for Women's Shot Put throwing event. Kileigh too is looking forward to the high school softball season beginning and she has recently taken up the hobby of building exquisite flower arrangements with Lego sets.



Paul Dana

Paul has been enjoying 8th grade and excels in Algebra and Science. He is now officially taller than his older cousins and continues to grow! Paul enjoys going to Virginia to see his family. This picture was taken recently with his older cousin, Lauren, at her high school Homecoming celebration. Paul is looking forward to starting Driver's Education class in the spring.

Youth Highlights ~ cont'd



Thomas Hall

Thomas is outgoing, helpful and polite. He enjoys singing in our church choir and attending our church youth activities. His favorite sport is kickball. Thomas loves watching movies, playing video games and chatting with his friends online. His favorite book is *Jaws*. Thomas is always willing to help friends and family and he loves his pets!



We Miss You



Greetings from Capital Oaks! Capital Oaks is the new home of Lois Vollmer. Lois moved recently to be near her son, Scott, and his wife. Capital Oaks is just a few miles from where Scott lives. Lois said to say hello to her church family, and she misses everyone.

Lois Vollmer

6498 Ray Road, Apt. 220
Raleigh, NC 27613



April

Reagan Boan	04/01
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
Molli Pottle	04/20
Catherine Scott	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
Lynne McSwain	05/17
Robert Coates	05/17
Barbara Hall	05/19
Nicolas Cameron	05/20
Charlotte Gallagher	05/21
Suzanne LaFollett-Black	05/21
Kileigh Cameron	05/22
Cathy Dawson	05/23
Rob Harding	05/29

June

Kim Wilson	06/01
Georgia Snow	06/02
Kerry Hooper	06/03
Louise Wilson	06/04
Hannah Summers	06/04
Dixie Oliver	06/05
Anna Harris	06/06
Jessica Crafton	06/10
Annie Kline	06/13
Steve Coman	06/14
Janet Reid	06/19
Paul Dana	06/19
Ingrid Leeper	06/22
Elaine Portman	06/26
Joan Smith	06/29
Rosemary Read	06/30
Rick Cavanaugh	06*30

Word Search

Isaiah 55:10

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

You will live in joy and peace.
 The mountains and hills will burst
 into song,
 and the trees of the field will clap
 their hands!

LIVE	SONG
JOY	TREES
PEACE	FIELD
MOUNTAINS	CLAP
HILLS	HANDS
BURST	

The words may be hidden in any direction:
horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards and backwards.



A Look Back and a Look Ahead

The Community Congregational Concerts series got off to a terrific start this season with “300 Years of Trumpet.” Our guest artists in October were Dr. Timothy Altman, trumpet, Dr. Mark Tollefsen, piano and Dr. Joseph Van Hassel, percussion. They played a delightful mix of music highlighting developments in the trumpet and important composers of trumpet repertoire. The audience especially enjoyed the wide variety of percussion instruments used.

Megan Kenny, violin, and Dr. Holland Phillips, viola, were the performers in our January concert, entitled “Come to the Dance.” The music included a mix of dance forms such as the waltz, the jig and others, as well as selections inspired by dance. Following the concert, the artists graciously answered audience questions about their instruments, the music and their collaboration.

Our next concert will be on Sunday, May 4th at 4:00 PM, when we host Duo Guitiano, the husband and wife team of Dr. Carlos Castilla,

guitar and Dr. Amanda Virelles, piano. Carlos and Amanda have been performing as Duo Guitiano for more than 20 years. Their duo repertoire is vast, including works from the past as well as newly commissioned compositions. They also have numerous recordings to their credit.

On Sunday, July 13th, also at 4:00 PM, we will welcome Dr. Larry Arnold's jazz trio, including piano, bass and drums. Larry is well known in our area as an active performer on piano, bass, and guitar. He is also the Director of the Sandhills Community College Jazz Band. This concert offers a chance to get out of the heat and enjoy a fun afternoon of jazz.

We hope you will put May 4th and July 13th on your calendars *now*, save these dates and invite your friends! Artists are now finalizing plans for the 2025-2026 season and they include a woodwind trio, a concert pianist, a flute and harp duo, and a well-known local popular singer and backup musicians.

Of course, in our church year the season of Lent began with our Ash Wednesday service on March 5th at 7:00 PM. This is always a lovely and moving service and it began our journey to Holy Week.

Our first service that week will be on Maundy Thursday, with a 7:00 service on April 17th. This is another beautiful and meaningful service and we hope more of the congregation than in years past will come to worship with us. If you prefer not to drive in the evening, please let us know and we will do our best to find you a ride.

Easter is on April 20th this year, and of course we will have joyous music for that holiest of days. James Miller will join us again on trumpet, Robert Mobsby will be our baritone soloist, and Amy Stovall will accompany on piano. There will be two movements from a Bach cantata, sung in English. The first is a stirring duet for trumpet and baritone, and the second is the well-loved “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” for the choir. James will also play on our prelude with organ and on our hymns. This promises to be a musical celebration of the resurrection!



This Time in My Life

I'm growing older, dear Lord, but I'll never outgrow my need to talk with you. I have come a long way in my life, and I thank you for helping me get this far. Let me look forward to each day, Lord. Be merciful and bless my remaining time with happiness and loved ones who care.

~ Ingrid ~



Carol and Lilly

Annual Chili/Soup Cook-Off

Hail to the Champs!

Chili - Lilly Richardson with Lilly's Wood Fired Chili.
 Soup - Carol Coates for her Shrimp and Corn Chowder.

Runners up:

Chili - Kathy Beddow with Bloody Mary Turkey Chili.
 Soup - Brenda Williams and Pastor Mike tied!
 Brenda's entry was Chicken Noodle Soup.
 Pastor Mike's entry was French Onion Beef Stew.

Everyone won with wonderful fellowship
 and plenty of good food!



Kathy, Pastor Mike
 and Brenda

Lilly's Wood Fired Chili

Ingredients:

1 onion	1 can pinto beans (rinsed)
1 lb ground beef	1 can chili beans
1 can diced tomatoes	1 can dark red kidney beans (rinsed)
	1 packet Kinder's Woodfired Chili Seasoning

Directions:

Cook diced onion with salt, pepper, garlic, and a little bit of chili powder.
 Remove onion and cook beef in same pan with the same seasoning, then drain.
 Put all remaining ingredients in crockpot.
 Add salt, pepper, garlic powder.
 Cook on high for about 2 hours and then on low for 4 (or on low for about 8 hours.)



~ Submitted by Natalie Richardson ~

Shrimp and Corn Chowder

2 1/4 cups whole kernel yellow corn. (One 15 oz. can plus part of an 8 oz. can)	10 oz. baby red potatoes, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
1/2 cup cream corn (from an 8 oz. can)	1/2 tsp. salt (you might want/need more)
2 Tbsp. butter	1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/2 cup chopped yellow onion (from 1 small onion)	8 oz. extra-large (26-30 count) cooked shrimp, peeled, deveined, tail removed, cut in half.
2 garlic cloves, chopped (about 2 tsp.)	1/2 cup Half & Half (or cream)
1 1/4 cups chicken broth	2 Tbsp. sliced fresh chives (optional)

Heat butter in a large saucepan. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in chicken broth, potatoes, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low; cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are just tender, 12 - 15 minutes.

Add corn and cream corn; stir until well combined.

Transfer 1 cup of the chowder into a blender. Secure lid on blender, and remove center piece to allow steam to escape. Place a paper towel over opening. (I wonder if this is all really necessary.) Process until smooth, about 15 seconds on 'Blend'. Stir mixture back into remaining chowder. Bring to a simmer over medium heat.

Add shrimp. Stir in half & half. When chowder is warm, serve and sprinkle with chives.

Note: Try to save this until tomorrow. It really does make a difference!

And by popular demand ...

Bill's Very Cherry Nut Cake

Ingredients:

4 eggs
 1 cup sugar
 2 cups flour
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 2 teaspoons cinnamon
 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
 1/2 teaspoon ginger
 1/8 lightly heaping teaspoon allspice
 4 lbs candied red cherries
 1 small jar of maraschino cherries
 8 cups, roasted pecan halves.
 (Roast pecans at 350° for 8 to 10 minutes or until fragrant. Let cool before adding to the cake).

Directions:

Preheat oven to 275°.

Butter and flour a tube pan.

In a mixing bowl, mix eggs and sugar very well and set aside.

In a very large bowl sift flour, salt, baking powder, and spices.

Mix all of your candied cherries in the dry flour, coating each cherry very well. Add your egg and sugar mixture to the flour and cherries, mixing very well. You may have to do it with your hands, scraping the sides and bottom of the bowl as you go.

Now add your roasted pecans. Make sure everything is incorporated very well.

Dump your mixture a little at a time in your tube pan pressing firmly all the way around as you go. (I use a mason jar to help press it down). This is a very important step.

Place cake in the oven on center rack for 2 hours and 10 minutes.

While the cake is cooking, use a food processor to chop up your maraschino cherries along with 1/2 cup of sugar. Mix very well until it becomes liquid. After the cake has come out and cooled, use this mixture to paint your cake with.



~ Submitted by Sharon Hogan ~

Congratulations



Richard Lawrenson and Pastor Dubbs share birthday cake on the occasion of Richard's 99th birthday!

Upgrades are Coming!

The Kitchen/Fellowship Hall areas in the education wing are in the process of being renovated thanks to (once again!) Richard and Sandy Dana, with assistance from Sandy's brother Teddy and John Portman. You may have already noticed the (gorgeous) new tile floor in the kitchen. Additionally the wall cabinets in the kitchen have been rearranged. The top of the center island will soon be black granite.

In the Fellowship Hall, the window that overlooks the choir room will be removed and filled in and the blue walls will be painted to match the existing "off-white" walls. The existing floor will be removed and new plank flooring will be installed.

What a treat it will be to have our coffee in this beautiful 'new' space!

Puns & Groaners

What disease did a cured ham actually have?

I was addicted to the Hokey Pokey and then I turned myself around!

Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation for the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water!

~ from Joanne Pileski ~
 (Mike's Mom!)



Fun, Good Food and Fellowship at iHOP

January 19, 2025



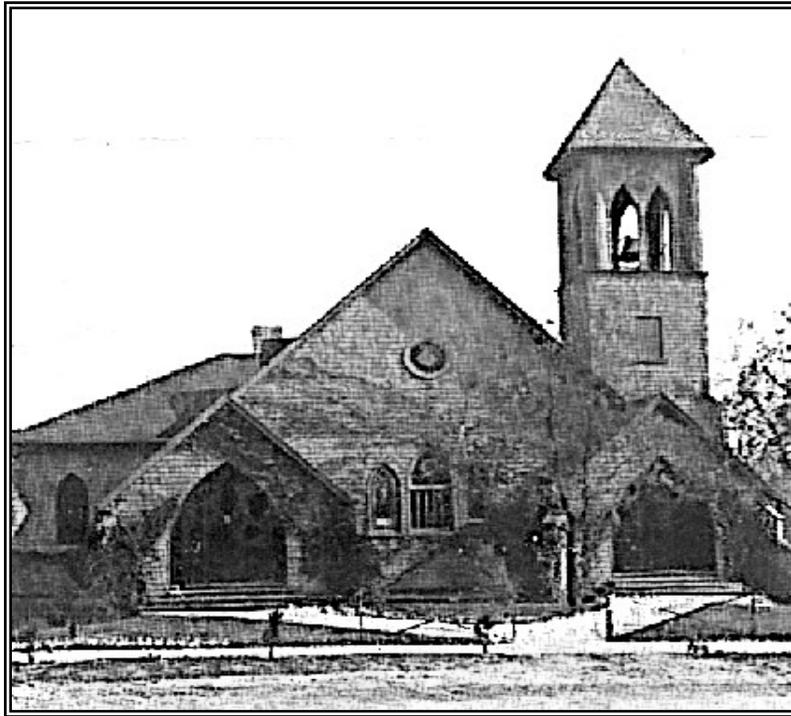
Bunch
For
Lunch



SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship Applications are available in the church office. If you know of a Moore County high school or college student that could benefit from a church scholarship, please pick up or request an application. Deadline to apply is March 30, 2025.

We also have a scholarship available at Elon University if you know of a student planning to attend or attending Elon.



STATEMENT OF BELIEF

(As the Congregational Church is non-creedal, this statement is designed not as an "end", but as a "beginning" from which faith and understanding may grow).

I. We believe in One God, infinite and eternal in His being, full of mercy and love toward His creation; a living factor in His world, who reveals Himself through nature and men, guiding all toward the perfection of His own character.

II. We believe in Jesus Christ as the expression in this world of the Divine Being, who, through His teaching and through His atoning life and death, has shown the way of eternal life.

III. We believe in the Holy Spirit as the constant presence of the Divine Being in human life; opening the eyes of God's children to an apprehension of truth, guiding them toward an appreciation of the love and nature of their Heavenly Father, and inciting them to follow their highest vision of what life ought to be.

IV. We believe in the Bible as the record of man's discovery of God, and of God's revelation of Himself in the minds, hearts and experiences of His people - culminated in the coming of His Christ. We also recognize that these scriptures constitute an indispensable guide for religious teaching and human conduct.

V. We believe that life will continue beyond the event of death, and that we may trust God, our Spiritual Father, to provide for all who love Him.

VI. We believe that it is the duty and privilege of all people to follow the way of life taught by the Christ. This includes the perfecting of their own personal character, opposing social wrongs, delivering their fellow men from oppression and hardship, and working for the extension of the principle of brotherhood among all God's children.

VII. We believe in the church universal, as made up of groups of people associated and organized to worship, praise, and serve God. We believe in the cooperation of all such churches as they serve the common goals brought forth by Christ.

VIII. We welcome to our fellowship all who, with reverence toward God and love for His people, accept the leadership of Jesus Christ, and desire to learn from Him and by His living example a sincere and simple faith which leads to a good, loving, and useful life.

The Community Congregational Church

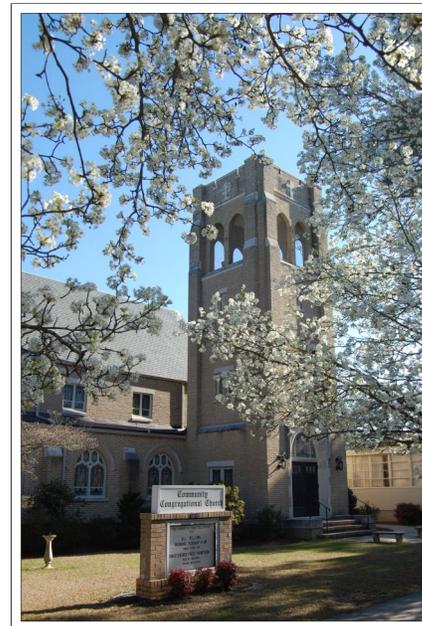
P.O. Box 62
Southern Pines, NC 28388-0062
"The Church of Wide Fellowship"



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Office: 910-692-8468
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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
Established in 1895
Photo by Renee Shawn Clement*

Weekly Calendar

- Sundays:** Worship Services - 9 am and 11 am
Adult Bible Study - 10 am - Bill Shockley, Moderator
Youth Sunday School (Ages 7 & up) - 10:15-10:50 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, God's Crime Scene
- Wednesdays:** Choir Rehearsal - 7 pm

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