

First UCC News

April 2025



Worship
Sundays at 11:00
207 W. Horal Street
Salisbury, NC 28144

First UCC Mission Statement
***"To grow in faith, love and fellowship
as we serve God and all of our community."***

APRIL SCRIPTURES

April 6

Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

April 13

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Luke 19:28-40
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 22:14-23:56

April 17 MAUNDY THURSDAY

Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 18 GOOD FRIDAY

Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
Hebrews 10:16-25
John 18:1-19:42

April 19 HOLY SATURDAY

Job 14:1-14 or
Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24
Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16
1 Peter 4:1-8
Matthew 22:27-66 or John 19:38-42

April 20 EASTER SUNDAY

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 65:17-25
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or
Acts 10:34-43
John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

April 27

Acts 5:27-32
Psalm 118:14-29
Revelations 1:4-8
John 20:19-31

Worship with us

Join us for Worship
Sunday mornings
11:00 a.m.

May we take an hour of your time
on Sunday mornings?

As you have probably heard, First UCC will be undergoing some changes after the Easter Season. Why not make this a new beginning? Beginning on April 27, each Sunday we will have different ministerial support that provides worship for us. You will find a short synopsis of each of our guest ministers in every Thursday Thoughts weekly newsletter. One or more of them should certainly prove of interest to you. Our congregation remains the same, you will see many of the same faces and we ask you for your presence as well!

If you have worshipped with us before, welcome back. If you would like to give a Sunday morning a try, welcome!!



Pastor Carol's last day will be April 20.
Join us in wishing her well.



- 1 6:30 p.m. Circle 6 Meeting
- 2 6:00 p.m. WOW Wednesday
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 6 **FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT**
11:00 a.m. Worship with Communion
- 7 6:00 p.m. Circle 7 Meeting
Isenberg Home
- 8 10:30 a.m. Meals on Wheels Deliveries
- 9 6:00 p.m. WOW Wednesday
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 10 11:00 a.m. Primetimers
5:00 p.m. Mission Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting
- 13 **PALM SUNDAY**
11:00 a.m. Worship
4:00 p.m. Property Committee Meeting
- 15 1:00 p.m. Bless These Stitches
- 16 6:00 p.m. WOW Wednesday
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 17 **MAUNDY THURSDAY**
6:30 p.m. Worship in Fellowship Hall
- 18 **GOOD FRIDAY**
- 19 **HOLY SATURDAY**
- 20 **EASTER SUNDAY**
11:00 a.m. Worship
- 21 **EASTER MONDAY**
Office Closed
- 22 10:30 a.m. Meals on Wheels Deliveries
- 23 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 24 RHM Shelter Meal
- 27 11:00 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Council Meeting
- 30 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

CAROL'S CORNER

Friends,

"This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on, time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone." These words, from the hymn This is a Day of New Beginnings by Brian Wren, resonate deeply with me as I reflect on the season of Easter and my own journey of transition. Wren originally wrote the hymn for New Year's Day, but it feels fitting as we approach Easter and as I prepare to move on to the next chapter of my ministry and you move onto yours.

Easter is a season of new life and new hope. Just as spring brings fresh blooms and the trees begin to bud, Easter reminds us that love, faith, and hope can be reborn in our hearts. But before we can fully embrace Easter's joy, we must walk through Holy Week—remembering Jesus' final supper, the washing of feet, his arrest, crucifixion, and death. By the time we reach Holy Saturday, Jesus' followers were stricken with grief, uncertain of what the future would bring. It is a day of waiting, of holding our breath, asking, Will Easter come?

And then... on Easter Sunday, we are reminded that nothing—absolutely nothing—can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. But Easter isn't just one day; it's a 50-day celebration of God's love and grace, a reminder that with God, all things are possible, even when the future feels uncertain. In a world that seems increasingly dominated by fear, anxiety, and uncertainty, we need Easter more than ever. We need its joy, its hope, its promise of new life.

As I reflect on my final Sunday here in Salisbury—on Easter—I feel a mixture of emotions. I will miss you all, and I know some of you may feel sadness at my departure. But I also know that this is a time of new beginnings—for all of us. I am excited about what lies ahead, and I trust that God is already preparing someone new to lead you. It is a time for all of us to grow, to evolve, and yes, to face the unknown. Change can be a little scary, just ask the disciples on Holy Saturday. But we know the truth—Easter comes. New life happens. And God is always ahead of us, leading the way.

I am grateful for the time we've shared together. It has been a gift to serve alongside you, to worship with you, and to walk together in faith. Now, as I prepare to move on, I pray that each of you continues to grow in faith and love. I trust that God will lead you into a future filled with hope and possibility.

I'll close with an old Celtic blessing, one that has always spoken to my heart and one that I now offer to you as we part ways:

"May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of God's hand."

Easter wins. New life begins. This is indeed a day of new beginnings.

Blessings and peace to each of you,

Pastor Carol



Join us for the ongoing Lenten Worship Series "An Invitation to Transformation."

A Lenten Journey

We hope you will be able to join us.

Wishing Pastor Carol Well:

The congregation will be collecting a secret Love Offering for Pastor Carol to express our appreciation for her leadership and to help with those expenses that always seem to pop up whenever you move half-way across the country. You may submit your Love Offering with the Sunday offering plate, or to the church office, or even by QR code if you know how to do that. Please submit your Love Offering by Palm Sunday so the office will have time to consolidate offerings and wrap it all in a pretty bow.

Easter Sunday will be Pastor Carol's last Sunday with us:

1. From 10:00 - 10:30 that morning, there will be a coffee and vegan cookie reception for Carol in the fellowship hall. In addition to presenting the Love Offering from the congregation, that would be a wonderful time for individuals to share affirmations, fond memories, and well wishes with her.
2. As part of the 11:00 Easter Service, Pastor Warren Casiday, Associate Conference Minister, will conduct a "Service of Separation." This is a recommended practice in the UCC.

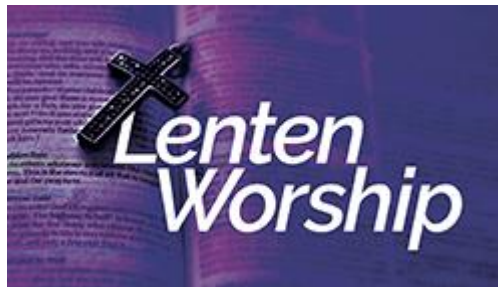
I know we can't really keep the Love Offering secret, and I have no idea if a vegan cookie is even a thing. But if we could, and if it was, I would want those things for Carol.

Dan Mikkelson, Chair
Pastor/Staff Relations Committee

April

Meetings and Other Events...

Meals on Wheels Deliveries	Tuesdays April 8 and 22 at 10:30 a.m.
WOW Wednesdays	Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.
Choir Rehearsal	Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Circle 6 Meeting	Tuesday, April 1 at 6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Circle 7 Meeting	Monday, April 7 at 6:00 p.m. (Home of John & Dawn Isenberg)
Primetimers	Thursday, April 10 at 11:00 a.m. (Earlier Time)
Missions Committee Meeting	Thursday, April 10 at 5:00 p.m.
Finance Committee Meeting	Thursday, April 10 at 6:00 p.m.
Property Committee Meeting	Sunday, April 13 at 4:00 p.m.
Bless These Stitches	Tuesday, April 15 at 1:00 p.m.
Church Council Meeting	Sunday, March 16 after Worship



Wednesday, April 2, 6:00 p.m.	<i>WOW Wednesday</i>
Sunday, April 6, 11:00 a.m.	<i>Fifth Sunday in Lent</i>
	<i>Worship with Communion</i>
Wednesday, April 9, 6:00 p.m.	<i>WOW Wednesday</i>
Sunday, April 13, 11:00 a.m.	<i>Palm Sunday Worship</i>
Wednesday, April 16, 6:00 p.m.	<i>WOW Wednesday</i>
Thursday, April 17, 6:30 p.m.	<i>Maundy Thursday Service</i>
	<i>(First UCC Fellowship Hall)</i>
Sunday, April 20, 11:00 a.m.	<i>Easter Sunday Worship with Communion</i>

The Easter lily has traditional and spiritual meaning. Mentioned many times in the Bible, the white lily symbolizes purity, rebirth, new beginnings and hope and is most often associated with the resurrection of Jesus Christ as observed on Easter. In Pagan traditions, the Easter lily is associated with motherhood and is often gifted to mothers as a symbol of gratitude. Across many religions and beliefs, the white lilies are symbols of purity and grace.

[Excerpt from <https://extension.unr.edu/publication.aspx?PubID=2140>]



Prayers

Desiree Artz, Brenda Bernhardt, Tyler Bernhardt, Gerri D. Crummett (Donna Odrosky's sister), Maggie Derby (great granddaughter of Jim Weaver), Stacy Erb, Rick Lockhart (Radell Lockhart's uncle), Jim Lyerly, John Marion, Shirley McNeil, Eddie Meeker, Doris Miller, Dan Morgan, Patsy Paxton, Glenda Shrewsbury, Patty & Mark Shuping and family, family of Romas Shuping, Tom Troutman, Barbara Waller, Waylon Ward, Frances Wensil, Janette Yost.

If you know of anyone who should be added or removed from our prayer list, let the office know.

Primitimers

The Primitimers met on March 13 with a catered meal, provided by Brenda Bernhardt as a generous gift to the Primitimers. Deceased members Romas Shuping and Pat Beck were remembered in prayer by Pastor Hallman. Six members of the Phoenix Readers presented a program on Dr. Seuss stories.

Primitimers will meet on Thursday, April 10 at 11 am (please note change of time) with a choral program by Y-Wonders, under the direction of Kathy Weaver Norris, former member of First UCC and sister to Jim Weaver. Flo Peck sings with the Y-Wonders. The meal will be served after the program. All members of Primitimers are asked to make a \$12 donation for the meal plus a small offering. Again, Debbie Suggs will provide a catered meal: ham, potato salad, a vegetable and rolls. Desserts and beverages will be provided by Primitimers. Please call the church office by Monday, April 7 at 12 noon to make your reservation.

5-Alive

Did you know??

Rowan Helping Ministries operates with a budget of \$4.2 million, with approximately 9 percent of funds going to administrative costs. Typically, nonprofits spend from 15 to 40 percent of revenue on administrative costs. The 50 volunteers who serve each day, 365 days per year, make this possible.

Programs include Shelter Services, Jeannie's Kitchen, the Clothing Center, Food Pantry, Crisis Assistance Network, Transitional Housing Programs, Rowan Helping Ministries-West, Rowan Helping Ministries-East, New Tomorrows, Food For Thought.

Rowan Helping Ministries, now celebrating its 38th year, works to move people out of crisis, poverty, hunger, and homelessness in Rowan County. The organization was built, and continues to thrive on the generosity of volunteers, who give their time, talents and treasures.

Your donations to First UCC's 5-Alive program help feed and serve the hungry, provide meals for insecure students, shelter the homeless, and so much more.

Council

We invite you to share any suggestions you may have with Church Council or Pastor/Parish Relations Committee. Concerns and suggestions are welcome at any time.

Our 2024-2025 Council members:

Don Whitfield
Phyllis Little
Shirley McNeil
Greg Alcorn
Ken Clapp
Carolyn Cline
Lynn Bernhardt

Pastoral/Staff Relations Committee members:

Dan Mikkelsen
Greg Alcorn
Karen Alexander
Ken Clapp

The next Council Meeting will be April 27 after Worship. Copies of approved monthly Council Minutes are available on the bulletin board outside of the Church Office. Minutes may also be emailed upon request.

Bless These Stitches



The folks of Bless These Stitches have been working away, and there are lots of knitted and crocheted items on the shelf outside the office that are ready to go to their new homes. If you know someone who would benefit from this mission, who needs to know that someone is thinking of them and praying for them, take a comfort item and deliver it to them as an extension of our ministry. If you need something for your personal use or for a gift, a donation is appreciated, and there is a suggested price list posted in the area. Donations are used to purchase more yarn to further the ministry.

If you knit or crochet, or want to learn, or just want to share fellowship with other needleworkers, join us on the third Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.!

The next meeting will be April 15.

Cleaning Robots



Watch for cleaning robots that sometimes run throughout the building. If it is running near where you are meeting, please press the "home" button on top and it should retreat to its base.

Mission Committee

The Mission Committee met on March 13 after the Primetimers Meeting to discuss plans for the next two months, April and May.

A tentative schedule has been agreed to provide another RHM Shelter Meal on the evening of Thursday, April 24.

Larry Bolick will continue to stock food items for the Blessing Pantry in March and will recruit volunteers to help in April. Food items for the Blessing Pantry may be placed in the bin in the Vestibule or be placed directly into the Pantry on Sundays or during the week.

One Great Hour of Sharing Annual Offering for disaster relief and international mission projects will be received on Easter Sunday, April 20.

Below is link to OGHS Be the Light Video:
<https://vimeo.com/1031597207?share=copy>

Thank you for your generous support of One Great Hour of Sharing!



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It connects you to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development efforts around the globe. When disasters strike, or when individuals are displaced due to violence or poverty, OGHS ensures immediate response and ongoing recovery.

Through your support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, microfinancing, and women's empowerment. By partnering with Global Ministries and international response networks, OGHS maximizes its impact. Your contributions help meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring long-term, sustainable solutions for affected communities.

One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received at First UCC on Easter Sunday, April 20.



Take a Blessing, Leave a Blessing, Be a Blessing

A Blessing Pantry has been placed on our church property as an outreach to the neighboring community. It is located near the driveway into the parking lot on Church Street, just north of Monroe Street.

Members of the Mission Committee continue to monitor the box and add items at least once a week, but demand is great and it is usually emptied in a couple of days.

Popular items include:

- Canned meats (chicken, tuna, ham, Spam)
- Healthy soups
- Beef stew
- Chef Boyardee canned meals
- Pop Tarts are appreciated
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Dehydrated foods like noodles, cereals, and dry beans
- Personal care products, including baby wipes
- Inexpensive can openers for cans without pop-tops

Excluded items include those in glass packaging and fresh items that are perishable in the weather conditions.

How can you help?

Bring your contributions to the church and place them in the box provided in the Narthex. This bin will distinguish items intended for the Blessing Box from donations for the Little Red Wagon and Rowan Helping Ministries.

You can also add items directly to the box.

Or make a monetary contribution to help the Mission Committee to keep the pantry supplied.

Thank you in advance for supporting this important effort to be an active presence in our neighborhood every day of the week!

—Linda Hauze for the Mission Committee

