

# *First UCC Focus*

## *August, 2019*



**9:45** *Sunday School*  
**11:00** *Worship*

**AUGUST SCRIPTURE**  
August 4  
 Hosea 11:1-11  
 Psalm 107  
 Colossians 3:1-11  
 Luke 12:13-21  
August 11  
 Isaiah 1:1, 10-20  
 Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23  
 Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16  
 Luke 12:32-40  
August 18  
 Isaiah 5:1-7  
 Psalm 80  
 Hebrews 11:29-12:2  
 Luke 12:49-56  
August 25  
 Jeremiah 1:4-10  
 Psalm 71:1-6  
 Hebrews 12:18-29  
 Luke 13:10-17

**AUGUST USHERS**  
 David Waller, Captain  
 Karen Alexander  
 Jo-Ann Hoty  
 John Isenberg  
 Susan Ward  
 Eric Webster

**AUGUST GREETERS**  
August 4 & 11  
 Tom Loflin & Janette Yost  
August 18 & 25  
 Millie Campbell

**AUGUST LAY READERS**  
August 4 & 11:  
 Patti Marion  
August 18 & 25  
 Kim Proffitt



**4** 9:45 Sunday School  
 11:00 Worship with Backpack Blessings and Installation of new Council members  
 Council Meeting Following Worship

**6** 7:00 Circle 6

**7** 7:30 Chancel Choir

**8** 5:00 Mission Committee Meeting

**11 LITTLE RED WAGON SUNDAY**  
 9:45 Sunday School  
 11:00 Worship  
 4:00 Property Committee Meeting

**13** 10:30 Meals on Wheels  
 6:30 Families First

**14** 7:30 Chancel Choir

**15** 7:00 Church Women Board Meeting

**18 11:00 Worship at Catawba College**  
 Lunch in Cafeteria After Worship

**20** 1:00 Bless These Stitches  
 6:30 Families First

**21** 7:30 Chancel Choir

**22** 6:00 PFLAG Meeting

**25 FIVE ALIVE SUNDAY**  
 9:45 Sunday School  
 11:00 Worship with Catawba College Covered Dish Meal in Fellowship Hall Following Worship  
 5:00 Worship Committee Meeting

**26 September Newsletter Deadline**

**27** 10:30 Meals on Wheels  
 6:30 Families First


**28** 7:30 Chancel Choir



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The items you brought for the **Little Red Wagon** in July have been taken to Rowan Helping Ministries. Donations totalled 65+ pounds. Thank you for your generosity.



## CAROL'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

What's the point? What is our purpose as followers of Jesus? This is the question Stephen Mattson suggests we, as American Christians, truly need to ask in his article, "Have We Forgotten the Point of Christianity?".

It's a question I think we've struggled with ever since the very beginning of Christianity or at the very least since the time of Constantine. Some theologians like John Dominic Crossan talks about how Christianity has been co-opted by the "empire." Many have pointed out that there seems to be two images of God within the Biblical text. There's the God of anger and violence, retribution and demands, and then there's the God of love, justice, grace, compassion and non-violence, the God that is exemplified by Jesus life and ministry.

There has been a lot of discussion declaring many things under the umbrella of "Christianity" the past couple of years-what is right/wrong, how we should vote, who is good and bad...it has challenged believers to prioritize the role that Jesus plays in their lives, says, Mattson.

He suggests, and I would agree, that the reality of the good news, the gospel cannot be heard and accepted unless we truly follow Jesus. Unless we emulate his life and his ministry.

Mattson asks, "What is the point of people worshipping the Prince of Peace who support policies that vilify whole groups of people?"

What can be the point of worshipping the King of Kings by people seeking wealth and privilege at the expense of the oppressed through corrupt systems that maintain and promote systemic financial, educational, and racial injustice?

What's the point of Christianity, if people who worship a Jewish Messiah from the Middle East, also discriminate and legislate against people who have different religious, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds?

What's the point of Christianity, if Christians-who celebrate a man crucified on a cross by an authoritarian government partly for being an ethnic minority-refuse to stand up and defend those who are facing persecution because of their skin color, ethnic background, gender, or political beliefs?

What's the point of Christianity if we celebrate God as creator of the world, while subsequently destroying the environment and participating in wasteful consumer-centric practices?"

As Mattson points out the interests and passions of Jesus are often the exact opposite of mainstream culture. I've talked about it as kind of an upside-down view of the world. Where the world sees weakness, God sees strength.

Jesus was all about welcoming the stranger, feeding the hungry, forgiving the sinner. Did his life bring him a better standard of living? Did it bring him wealth? Or even power? (In case you aren't sure — the answer is "NO!")

As illogical as it seems to us at times, humble service, defending the powerless, fighting for the oppressed, welcoming the stranger, and radically loving all-as absurd as it sounds-this following Jesus-well-it's not for the faint of heart.

Hope to see you all in church!

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Carol

First UCC



*Be on the lookout for youth mission activities for late July and early August. These will be local activities that can be done in a series of a couple of days.*

*We are looking for ways to help the people of the church. If you have some odd jobs that you have been putting off, contact Weston Henderson.*

*We are in the process of creating some family-oriented activities for the fall on a monthly basis. A short questionnaire will be circulated during the summer months to pinpoint what times and/or activities might generate the most interest.*

*Youth Spotlight: Patty Shuping will continue to focus on one of our youths to introduce to our readers so that we may get to know our young members better. Patty will be contacting you to collect information about your children.*

### Everyday Life Survival Kit

Autumn begins a new season, whether it be the beginning of school or the beginning of fall schedules and church activities. Here are a few things to place in your survival kit to make it through the season:

- Toothpick: Pick the good qualities in everyone including yourself.
- Rubberband: Be flexible. Things might not always go the way you want.
- Band-Aid: To heal hurt feelings, either yours or someone else's.
- Eraser: Everyone makes mistakes. That's okay, we learn by our mistakes.
- Candy Kiss: Everyone needs a hug or a compliment everyday.
- Mint: You are worth a mint to your family and friends.
- Bubble Gum: Stick with it and you can accomplish anything.
- Pencil: List your blessings every day.
- Tea bag: Relax daily and go over your list of blessings.

### FIVE ALIVE FUND: HELPING FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

A resident came in Rowan Helping Ministries seeking assistance because her water had been disconnected. The household consisted of the 38-year-old client, her 17-year-old son and her two daughters, ages 7 & 15. Her father passed away in February and she went to Michigan for the funeral. Then her husband left at the end of February. She is employed and will be sustainable once the water is back on and the bill is caught up. The client brought in a receipt showing that she paid the City of Salisbury a portion of the water bill and the reconnection fee. Rowan Helping Ministries sent a voucher to the City of Salisbury toward the remaining portion of the bill. She was glad to know that her family could remain in their home.

REMEMBER;

1. You can contribute to this worthy cause any Sunday!
2. 100% of your contribution goes to help citizens of the Salisbury/Rowan area and to our church family.

# August

**Blessing of the Backpacks** will be held on **Sunday, August 4** during worship.

On **August 4** there will be an installation of new council members. Following worship, all committee chairs and council members will gather for a luncheon meeting. The new council members will begin in September but will stay for the lunch and meeting as we talk about planning for next year. This meeting will take the place of the regular scheduled August meeting.

Choir begins again on **August 7**.

The Foundation Application deadline is **August 17**. You may pick up a hard copy at the Church office or one can be emailed to you.

Mark your calendars for **August 18 and August 25**. For two Sundays we will have a joint worship with Catawba College to allow us to worship with new students. On **Sunday, August 18**, worship will be at the college with lunch following in the cafeteria. If you would like transportation to the College please let the Church office know during the **week of August 12**. Transportation will be available either at the Church or from your home on the 18th. On **Sunday, August 25**, Catawba College will worship at First UCC. There will be a covered dish meal following worship and will include guests. Please bring a dish to share. Music will be provided by the Websters.

Brian Russell will have his Ecclesiastical Council meeting on **September 8**. Brian is in the care of our church. Everyone is invited to attend at the Church of the Holy Covenant in Charlotte at 2:30. Two others will stand before the Council as well.

VBS has been rescheduled to **Saturday, September 14**.

Watch for more information.



*In Our Thoughts  
& Prayers*



Javis Arey, Mary Austin, Mabel Barnhardt, Kay Bassinger (Linda Thompson's mother), Gene Beck (Weston Henderson's grandfather), Robin Blackwell (Daughter of Sara Jean Propst), Julia Callaway, Jim Clary, Marie Cuthrell, Joyce Harris (friend of Martha Haun), Martha Haun, Gary Hauze (no visits or phone calls, please), Winnie Mikkelson, Harry & Nancy Hipp, Joseph Najarian (son of Dena & David Najarian), Pat Norris, Eleanor Peeler, Pat Shoe, Paul & Glenda Shrewsbury, Patty Shuping and family, Zach Shuping, Waylon & Susan Ward. **If you know of anyone who should be added or deleted from our prayer list, be sure and let the office know.**

To my family at First UCC,

Thank you for all your thoughts, prayers, visits and cards during my recent knee surgery. Not quite back to normal but I'm getting there. Also, Thank You for all your concerns, prayers, calls and cards remembering us during the time of my brother's passing.

In Christian Love,  
John Wagoner