



February

2024

DUMC News
Davidson United Methodist Church



The Power of Touch

REV. JIM HUMPHRIES - PASTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE

In one of my favorite scenes in the gospels, a man with leprosy comes to Jesus and begs him to be healed of his disease. Jesus is moved with pity, touches the man, and he is immediately healed (Mark 1: 40-42). On the surface, this seems like so many other healing miracles of Jesus. But there's actually something more going on.

What makes the story extraordinary is that Jesus could have healed the man without touching him. He healed on other occasions without physically touching people; sometimes even from a distance. That Jesus chose to touch the leper might just be the most important part of this story. Because it reminds us both of Jesus' compassion, and of the importance of human touch.

Touch is the first sense to develop in human beings, and as our other senses fade in later years, touch will likely remain the one sense that can keep us best connected to others. And yet, sadly, many of us fail to grasp the power of touch. But Jesus certainly did. He fully understood that the leper didn't just need to be physically healed, but he also longed for human touch. Lepers were considered "unclean" by society and religion, and never received human contact outside the "colonies" in which they were forced to live. So, Jesus' simple (yet profound) touch of the leper must have brought an emotional healing, along with a sense of connection, belonging and worth.

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We must obviously be respectful in the ways we touch one another. But something as simple as a handshake, an appropriate hug, or holding someone's hands as we speak with them can offer tremendous benefits. The right kind of touch can lower blood pressure, heart rate, stress and cortisol levels; and can stimulate the hippocampus, the area of the brain involved in memory, learning and emotion. Appropriate touch can truly be healing ministry.

I am grateful the days of social distancing are behind us. For it's difficult for us to be the body of Christ without being "in touch" with one another. So I hope you will consider how your use of appropriate touch might help to heal and strengthen the lives of others. And I look forward to shaking your hand this Sunday at church.

Youth Update

REV. MEREDITH HINTON - NEXT GENERATION MINISTRY ARCHITECT
AND PASTOR OF YOUTH

2024 has started with a lot of excitement and joy. We celebrated our first ever lock-in with the youth and had a wonderful time utilizing our new space. We are so grateful for the new building and are loving the youth center!

We kicked off Confirmation with over 40 youth registered. I am grateful for the clergy and others who have signed up to teach the youth weekly. And, of course, I am beyond thankful for the adults who serve as small group leaders for the Confirmands. Walking with them in their faith over the next few weeks is a powerful illustration of the reality that we are ALL here to support our young people as they grow.

We look forward to the upcoming retreats with the youth this month and next. The High School youth will be traveling to the beach the last weekend in February - please keep us in your prayers!



A man with a skin disease came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, "I am willing. Be made clean!"

MARK 1:40

Sympathy To

The Hogg family in the death of John and Deborah's daughter, Kathleen Hogg Labretone.

The Weathers family in the death of Will's mother and father.

The Hemstreet family in the death of Tom's sister.

The Alexander family in the death of Phillip's father.

The Stamey family in the death of Robb's mother.

The Welborn family in the death of Cherie's mother.

To add your name or that of a friend or loved one to the DUMC Intercessory and Clergy Prayer List, please contact Jonna Eichorn at jeichorn@davidsonumc.org or 704-892-8277 ext. 221.

2023 Missions Year in Review

REV. BRAD HINTON - PASTOR OF MISSIONS



United
Women
in Faith

Last month, we shared highlights of Missions at DUMC. This month, we share highlights of the work of DUMC United Women in Faith (UWF). The highlights below have been compiled by Patty Gruce, Lisa Delano, and the DUMC United Women in Faith circles. Thank you to all those connected to UWF and for being the Body of Christ in our community.

United Women in Faith Mission

We seek to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

2023 UWF Ministry Highlights

- Six circles covering all ages met monthly to love, support, and pray; to learn about issues affecting women and children and their needs; and to serve and be in mission with each other and other organizations to meet needs and effect change.
- We gave financial gifts totaling \$5,080 to 12 different local agencies. Yearly fundraising (Sunday Sundries and Snacks, Fall Back Sale, and pimento cheese sales) supports our discretionary giving, which we share within our community to those whose efforts make a difference in the lives of women, children, and youth.
- Individual mission giving to UWF impacted the national UWF's work in our state, our country, and across the world.
- Our 2023 goal of \$2,000 was exceeded with an additional gift to the United Women in Faith Legacy Fund, ensuring that UWF makes a difference for many years to come.
- UWF led two Wednesday morning Bible Studies which were offered to all women in the church in the spring (*The Belonging Project*) and fall (*Devoted, 30 Days with Women of the Bible*).
- UWF continued to serve the families of DUMC with bereavement reception/meals, recognition of births with a rosebud during worship, and outreach to homebound members.
- During the Advent and Christmas seasons, we continued our tradition of displaying a tree with Chrismon symbols in the Sanctuary for the congregation to enjoy and take pictures with, as well as providing an opportunity to learn more about the symbols and their significance.
- Our members generously provided items to help fill Christmas boxes for our Joy Store families including fresh fruit, candy, hot chocolate, protein bars, and candy canes.
- UWF supported Levine Dickson Hospice by donating over 600 individual snacks.
- UWF members participated in UWF Metro District events, such as the Prayer Breakfast, Mission Study, and Annual Celebration as well as the WNCC UWF's Ubuntu Day of Service.
- Our unit of six circles once again earned Mission Today's Gold Unit status by qualifying with 16 out of 27 criteria.
- The UWF Reading Program is supported in the DUMC Library by the purchase of books and the promotion of the program. Members participate at different levels, reading from five different categories: Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Education for Mission, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth. Two of our members reached Level II and four reached Level I.

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- Our annual United Women in Faith Sunday honored Jenny Brewton, Karen Holmes, Jessica Kearney, and Marsha Payne with a Special Mission Recognition and memorialized our members Judy Feigl, Gerri Sampson, Pat Delk, Ann Hawk, Faye Hayes, Louise Martin, Lois Pippin, Janet Poole, and Dorothy Varner.
- The Carrie Robinson Circle was revitalized with 30 members. Christian Mothers United also began a new chapter. CMU hosted several welcome receptions for DUMC preschool parents.
- First Friday Fellowship began with monthly opportunities for fellowship and service including UMCOR hygiene kits taken to District Mission Study, literacy bags taken to Ada Jenkins LEARNWorks Afterschool Program, our first Walk for Mission, summer lunch bags for Angels and Sparrows, breakfast and lunch provided for LEARNWorks Summer Camp, awareness/outreach through Go Jen Go, 180 containers of pimento cheese made, and assembled Joy Store Christmas boxes.
- All women in UWF have access to our ongoing Prayer List, which is updated and distributed monthly.
- A Bright Lights article on our Carolina Caviar, Pimento Cheese with Heart, was submitted to the Response magazine, and we are anxiously awaiting its publication.
- Cookies with Santa, open to all DUMC families and DUMC Preschool families, was held in the Chapel. We participated in Trunk or Treat at DUMC.
- Updated and refreshed DUMC UWF information on the DUMC website. It is listed as a separate tab under Grow.
- We continue to have a seat on the Missions Committee team and attend monthly meetings as well as have representation as a voting member on the DUMC Administrative Council.
- Six UWF members participated in the Needs of the North tour organized by the Ada Jenkins Center.
- Joy Circle members were integrated into the Mizpah Circle.
- Sharing Circle volunteered monthly at Bags of Hope packing allergy bags.
- CMU and Mizpah Circle joined together to pack Bags of Hope Thanksgiving Break bags.
- Carrie Robinson Circle helped make Christmas merry for 15 families through the Merry Magic Project.
- Founders Circle generously donated snacks to the Ada Jenkins LEARNWorks Afterschool Program.
- Mizpah Circle has been a longtime supporter of All in Guatemala and Brookstone Schools Summer Mission Possible Camp.
- Abundant Life Circle has a great relationship with Bridges of Heart, formerly Bright Blessings, and with Hope House where they have held spring and fall events as well as providing a Thanksgiving meal and gratitude bracelets.
- The DUMC Unit contributed to all five channels of UWF Mission Giving: Gift to Mission, Gift in Memory, Pledge to Mission, Special Mission Recognition, and World Thank Offering.

If you would like to learn more about UWF or if you would like to join a circle, please reach out to UWF President, Lisa Delano, at mybrowneyedgirls@msn.com.

UWF Supported Agencies



Winter-Spring Concert Series

REV. DR. KEVIN TURNER - PASTOR FOR MUSIC AND WORSHIP

This spring, the music ministry is celebrating the opening of our new spaces by sponsoring a series of concerts. Last month, we hosted Fernando Ortega. This month, our own Carolina Brass will be playing a concert on Tuesday, February 13, at 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary.



CAROLINA BRASS QUINTET

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13
7:00 P.M.

Come and experience the premiere
brass ensemble of the southeast!

A freewill offering will be taken.

Carolina Brass has been playing for worship at Christmas and Easter for many years. This year, they are our “artists-in-residence.” This means that, in addition to playing for Easter and Advent services, they will be playing a few concerts during the year. In February, their program will contain music by American composers. We will take a love offering to offset costs.

Ash Wednesday is on Valentine’s Day this year. I humbly suggest you celebrate Valentine’s Day on the 13th by attending this concert to hear some beautiful music by our friends from Carolina Brass. In March, April, and May, we will have other events that cover a diverse range of musical styles.

Snacks Needed for Davidson Wesley College Ministry

CINDY TURNER - COLLEGE CAMPUS LAISON

Would you like to provide snacks for our student ministry at Davidson College? This is an easy way to serve our college students, and it is much appreciated! We have openings for eight Tuesdays this semester. You can drop off food at the Church Office anytime between Sunday and Tuesday. Visit the DUMC website and click on Event Registrations to sign up, or contact Cindy Turner at 704-737-7548 with questions.

Welcoming a New Year

REV. DIANNE LAWHORN - PASTOR OF EDUCATION

a new year stands on my doorstep ready to enter
my life’s journey.

something in me welcomes this visitor:

the hope of bountiful blessings

the joy of a new beginning

the freshness of unclaimed surprises

something in me rebuffs this visitor:

the swiftness of the coming

the boldness of the entrance

the challenge of a year’s good-bye

something in me fears this visitor:

the unnamed events of future days

the wisdom needed to walk love well

the demands of giving away and growing

a new year stands on my doorstep

with fragile caution I move

to open the door for its entrance.

my heart leaps with surprise

joy jumps in my eyes,

for there beside this brand-new year

stands my God with outstretched hand!

He smiles and gently asks of me: can we walk this year
together?

and I, so overwhelmed with goodness,
can barely whisper my reply: welcome in!

-Joyce Rupp, Fresh Bread

CHURCH-WIDE STUDY

Five-week study coincides with sermons preached February 11 - March 10.

UNAFRAID

LIVING WITH
COURAGE AND HOPE IN
UNCERTAIN TIMES

ADAM HAMILTON

Bestselling author Adam Hamilton draws on the latest research, therapeutic insights, biblical principles, and personal experience to untangle the knots of fear and truly embrace Jesus's recurring counsel to his followers: "Do not be afraid."

For anyone struggling with fear, worry, or anxiety, or who wonders how families and communities can live as peacemakers in troubled times, *Unafraid* offers an informed and inspiring message full of practical solutions.

Contact Pastor Dianne at dlawhorn@davidsonumc.org or admin, Gail Spach, at gspach@davidsonumc.org to join a group.

New Church-Wide Study

DUMC will be hosting a Church-Wide Study from February 11- March 10 on the book *Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times* by Adam Hamilton. We hope that you'll purchase a copy and read along as we move through this 5-week worship series.

Contact [Gail Spach](#) at the Church Office if you would like to be connected with one of the groups that will be discussing this book.

Opportunities for Service at General Conference 2024

REV. DAVID HOCKETT - SENIOR PASTOR

The United Methodist Church General Conference will be April 23 - May 3. This year, it will be held in our own neighboring city, Charlotte! This event will bring United Methodists from all over the world to our area.

General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church. The assembly meets at the beginning of each quadrennium to consider revisions to church law, as well as adopt resolutions on current moral, social, public policy and economic issues. It also approves plans and budgets for church-wide programs for the next four years.

The Western North Carolina and North Carolina Conferences of The United Methodist Church have created an informational website dedicated to enhancing the General Conference experience for those serving and attending. Recognizing the importance of providing valuable resources and hospitality for attendees, [WelcomeToGC.org](https://www.welcome toegc.org) shares opportunities to serve during General Conference and what visitors need to know to navigate the city of Charlotte during their visit. There are many opportunities for serving during this event and I encourage you to participate however you can to represent our church, community, and city.

I will be serving as a delegate at this year's General Conference and would be happy to have conversation or answer any questions you may have about General Conference. To learn more about General Conference and opportunities to serve, please visit [WelcomeToGC.org](https://www.welcome toegc.org).



A Journey Through the Alexander Education Building on a Sunday Morning

BRITTANY VIEHMANN - DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Sunday mornings for many start with entering through the parking lot at DUMC greeted by warm coffee and snacks that have been prepared by Jack and Marsha downstairs. Leamon welcomes and helps people check in and find Sunday Morning classes and sends them up the stairs to the first and second floors.

Our youngest friends find a home with Ms. Shaun's warm embrace alongside a gentle, caring, team in Childcare. Preschool friends who are three and four years old find their space in the corner room where they learn how to be together at church. Our kindergarten and first graders hurry to their room filled with joy and activities that help them experience church community. Nancy is helping to welcome and navigate in the hallway.



As we travel to the second floor, children wave to their parents as they walk into their lively and exciting second and third grade room with Ms. Erica or edge a little bit closer to their youth group years by stopping in the fourth and fifth grade room with Ms. Renee. Our second and third graders have silly and inquisitive conversations that jump all around and make us smile. Fourth and fifth graders are uniquely met with learning opportunities that help them grow closer in their relationships with each other and with God.

Our classrooms provide time with teachers who love them and help them learn about how much God loves them. Whether it is Jenny, Carson, Karen, Lisa, Jessica, Yancey, Chris, Holly, Jeff, Sean, Jason, Laura, Rebecca, Melissa, Wendy, Cathy, Scott, Cindy, Dawn, Beth, Cameron, Kristin, Nicholas, Sarah, Jamie, Anna, Sidney, Grace, Sally, Shelley, Alexis, Kim, and so many more wonderful people not listed here, each Sunday morning there are nearly 20 adults pouring into our children's faith formation.

A smile in the hallway, a lesson that is taught, a fun church snack, a friend, the people who love to see them makes for a loving environment. I am tremendously grateful for the people who serve each week who share God's love with our children. Their presence helps our children feel welcome, safe, and loved, which is the foundation they need to build relationships and learn and grow in their faith. Our children have a place where they know they belong. A place where they can grow and have so many caring adults who are impacting them and the world around us. We invite you to come along on our journey and we hope to see you on a Sunday morning soon!

Preschool Update

Our weekday preschool at DUMC is in full swing registering for the 2024-2025 school year! We are enjoying having new and current families register for next year's classes. Our faith-based, play-based preschool provides an environment for children to learn about God's love through the caring adults who teach each day. We get to learn about God from Rev. Meredith Hinton and from our teachers. We get to enjoy the beautiful world God has provided through outside play. We get to make friendships and build community too. We would love for anyone looking to be part of our preschool family to come join our teaching team or to register their children for the next school year. Our preschool is a wonderful gift to all of us and we can't wait to share it with you too!

February Library Spotlight

GAIL SPACH - LIBRARIAN AND ADMIN TO FAITH
FORMATION AND MISSIONS

2024 United Women of Faith Reading Program books are available in the library! The United Women of Faith (UWF) Reading Program books reflect the core values of the UWF: the empowerment of women, youth, and children; anti-racism and multiculturalism; inclusion and equity; fair labor practices; and economic and environmental stewardship and sustainability.



The reading program itself is inclusive; you don't have to be a United Methodist or a woman to participate. It involves reading at least five books a year, one from each of five categories. The purpose of the program is to expand understanding, encourage critical thinking, increase empathy, nurture spiritual growth, and strengthen involvement. With knowledge comes transformation; with transformation comes action.

The library has 34 books from this year's list including the following (pictured):

Fierce Love by Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis; *Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred* by Victoria Loorz; *Defiant: What the Women of Exodus Teach Us about Freedom* by Kelley Nikondeha; *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer; *The 1619 Project* by Nikole Hannah-Jones; *Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive* by Stephanie Land; *The Loneliness Epidemic* by Susan Mettes; and *You Have a Voice* by Vera Ahiyya.

For more information, visit www.uwfaith.org/resources/reading-program or contact **Gail Spach** at the Church Office.

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