

May I admit that I was a bit nervous on Easter? For starters it was my first Easter sermon to preach Downtown. I do not take lightly the shoulders I stand on in the long line of pastors that have served us faithfully. Secondly, the expectation for Easter is great. It is the second hardest preaching day for me - right behind Christmas Eve, which is in itself filled with expectation and a well-known narrative. So you can see why I didn't want to mess things up!

I am thankful for all the people who worked so hard to make sure Easter was a wonderful day. The ushers did a masterful job getting folks through the Communion lines. The sanctuary was beautifully appointed with flowers. The musicians in the balcony and on the platform added so much to our day and complemented the choir so well. Did I mention the choir? They have been and continue to work hard to make our worship experiences powerful, and Holy Week and Easter was certainly no exception. And I am

grateful for our staff who thoughtfully prepared for the day and made a lot of moving parts work together seamlessly. Thank you all for what you do and the spirit in which you do it!

While some may view Easter as the high point of the year in terms of attendance, I prefer to look at it as the potential. I believe that Easter shows us what our reach is in the community as well as reveals who is under our care for discipleship. Across all the communities we had over 1,000 people attend one of our six Easter services. That number represents individuals, families, newcomers, long-time members, occasional attenders and out-of-town visitors. They all represent our current and potential impact in the community and responsibility to care for and grow as disciples. It will take all of us working together to provide the care and welcome needed to deepen our witness. Will you join me in doing just that?



**Our church building** should be a place where all feel welcome to come and encounter God. I doubt any of us would disagree with this, right? Everything we learn from children's moments to Sunday School, from Bible Study to the best of sermons...they all teach us to understand the church as an extension of God's love and welcome.

Yet at the same time we recognize that we live in a world where bad things happen, where people act in ways that we wish they wouldn't, and that we have people and things that we have to keep safe. Because of this many of us have an instinct to lock things down, to have every possible contingency planned for, and for us to "know" everyone.

In many ways these instincts run counter to each other. We want to welcome all, but we can't guarantee total security. We want to be safe, so we can't leave the church building open or even have it accessible to members 24 hours a day. Striking a balance is an ongoing process. Let's acknowledge this and name that we have to make compromises.

We have many different teams - Trustees, ushers, congregational care, and others - working hard to think through our options, weigh the costs and benefits, and make the best possible plans. Some measures are obvious and others go unnoticed by most. Below are some of the ways we are working to balance welcoming and protecting:

- By rekeying exterior doors to a new master key and containing access to that key.
- Controlling our main doors by access codes that change regularly or by key fobs that can be purchased for \$10 and do not change
- Combining human and technological security to ensure our buildings are armed each evening. Please ensure that you are out by 10:00 pm each evening!
- Using a network of cameras and DVR storage to help in monitoring our facilities
- Having a police officer on site each Sunday
- Maintaining our central calendar where we keep track of who is where
- Planning for many different scenarios
- Having a new Welcome Center in the Gathering Hall
- Staff that is constantly looking at how we welcome our guests
- Amazing Sunday School teachers who welcome new folks
- Committed laity who warmly welcome our guests

We know that we can't plan for every scenario and we know there is a chance that a new person, or maybe even one of you, has been frustrated when you couldn't get in a door or the building wasn't available. But we believe that this tension of security and welcome is an important one to hold. God has entrusted us with so much in terms of our property but even more in terms of our people. *Chad Foster*, Executive Pastor

## Grow

### Meet the Confirmation Class of 2018



Carson Lee Faulconer is 12 years old and is the son of Danny & Jill Faulconer and the brother to Lizzie Faulconer. His Friend in Faith is Mike Green, and during the first Confirmation class they discovered their favorite food is the same! Carson enjoys playing soccer, baseball and swimming. One of the most special parts of Confirmation for Carson was receiving weekly emails from his Friend in Faith, Mike. Carson wants to serve Jesus and others by continuing to help with Room in the Inn and God's Table, and one of his favorite things about First Church is his friends and the Youth Group.



Elizabeth Della Hunter is 13 years old and is the daughter of Robin & David Hunter. Her Friend in Faith is Jill Shambhu. Elizabeth enjoys drawing and listening to music. The thing Elizabeth will remember most about Confirmation is that she feels more mature and growing in her church and as a Christian. Elizabeth wants to serve Jesus by reaching out to others to either come to church with her or encouraging them to find a church of their own. The thing Elizabeth loves most about First Church is the Youth Group and the community of the church.



Zachary Robert Rothrock is 12 years old and is the son of Kit Hornback and Jason Rothrock and the brother of Anna. His Friend in Faith is John Koenig. Zach enjoys video games, tennis, reading and flying his drone. The thing he will remember most about Confirmation is the people. Zach wants to serve Jesus by spreading the Word of God. The thing Zach loves most about First Church is the people.

**Summer Small Group:** Join us this summer as we journey through the Book of Samuel. We will gather Downtown from 5:30-7:30 PM on Wednesdays from **May 23rd-August 8th**. We will take 30 minutes for a brown bag dinner and fellowship then 90 minutes of exploring the text together. This study requires no outside work and recognizes that many of us will be out some weeks with travel and other plans. Childcare will be available. Please let our Executive Pastor, Chad Foster, know if you are interested in participating by emailing him at [chad@1stumc.org](mailto:chad@1stumc.org) or texting him at 252-916-0250.

## Serve

**Habitat Build:** Our family this year will be Riziki Nzibonera, a mother of five from Tanzania and the Congo. Her family has been in Lexington for three years and they're anxious to have a home! This year's house will be built at 1773 Russell Cave Rd. in the Brookfield Chase community, same as the past two years. The current calendar shows work starting Wednesday, June 13, and continuing on Fridays and Saturdays through July 14. At that point, professionals do the roof, plumbing, HVAC, drywall and electrical work. Volunteers are needed again on weekends August 10 - September 8. Please sign up online at <https://lexingtonhabitat.volunteerhub.com/lp/methodist?format=List&filter=All>.

**Altar Flowers** – We have several dates available for the purchase of altar flowers for this year. Dates are available in August, September, October, November and December. If interested in purchasing flowers, please contact Mike and Sheila Green at 859-271-4789 (Home), 859-533-5282 (Cell) or [greenlex1961@yahoo.com](mailto:greenlex1961@yahoo.com). God bless.

**God's Table**, our monthly potluck dinner for our friends in the community, will be on May 15, 2018. Please bring a dish and a friend to our Fellowship Hall around 5:30 pm. Plan to stay and help prepare and serve the meal, if you are able. For more information, contact Melinda Kemp, 278-3570 or [melindakemp@twc.com](mailto:melindakemp@twc.com).

**United Methodist Women Sweet Sunday Sale:** April showers bring May flowers. Please come visit our table in the Gathering Hall on May 6, 2018. We will celebrate Spring with sweet treats for you to enjoy right then or take home for Sunday dessert. Your financial donations for our baked items help support needs within our community. Thank you, The board of First United Methodist Women

## From the Prayer Action Team

**Prayer booklet of Serve partners:** During the month of May, we have lots of opportunities to see God using FUMC to expand His Kingdom. The Prayer Action Team has prepared a prayer booklet for members of the congregation to use in May and going forward. It's called "*You will be My witnesses...Across the Street and Around the World!*" This resource will help you pray specifically for the people and projects with whom God has connected us. Be sure and get your copy to use in your personal devotional time and in your family devotional time. We encourage Sunday School Classes and other groups to use this resource as they are praying together each week. Let's add the strength of our personal and corporate prayers to the ministries we are connected to—to make them even more effective in showing the love of God!

In May we honor our mothers. Check the Prayer Carousel in the Gathering Hall for a prayer guide to help us pray in new ways for our mothers and for those important women in our lives who have loved us with a mother's love.

*"Be still and know that I am God."* (Ps. 46:10) It is difficult to be still in this world full of noise and responsibility. Jesus had the same problem and often retreated to a mountain or garden to be alone with his Father. Jesus invited his disciples "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." (Mark 6:31) We extend an invitation to you to "Come to the Prayer Room" to spend some quiet time with your Father. It is open any time the church or offices are open. You will be blessed and He will be glorified.

## Church Family

**1st Church Golf league** begins its 5th season beginning Thursday May 3rd and runs all summer. First tee time is 5:18 PM at Picadome Golf Course, Harrodsburg Road. Men, women and youth invited. Game is handicapped so all are competitive. Come join the fun. Bring a friend. Contact Dulaney Wood, [dwood007@aol.com](mailto:dwood007@aol.com), for more information or to sign up.

**Welcome to the First Church Family!** In addition to the members of our confirmation class introduced above, we are happy to welcome these new members: Charlie Barnhart, Jennifer Barnhart, John Davis, Jennifer and Gary Graves, Kim and Donna Shaw, and Carma and Don Stanley.

**We celebrate** the recent arrival of Lucy Lamm, daughter of Rich and Kalynn and sister of big brothers Jack and Bobby.

**Graduate recognition:** We will recognize 2018 graduates in services on **May 20**. If you are graduating from high school, college, or a graduate program, we want to celebrate with you on that day. High school graduates: please contact the church office (233-0545, [info@1stumc.org](mailto:info@1stumc.org)) and let us know which high school you are graduating from and any future plans you'd like to share.



**May 2018**

We are a church that makes disciples - across the street and around the world.



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***Our next newsletter will cover both June and July. The deadline is May 22.  
Please send submissions to info@1stumc.org. Thank you!***

## Serve

*Beginning April 29, representatives from several of our Serve partners will be here to give in-person updates on their work. We look forward to hearing their stories and seeing how God is working through our partnership. Please plan on coming to the Gathering Hall between services for a chance to learn a little more. Our Downtown Serve Leader is Bryan Mullins – you can reach him at [bmullins@creativelexington.com](mailto:bmullins@creativelexington.com).*

**April 29 | Wayne Oates, KY United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth**

**May 6 | Jeremiah Myers, Habitat for Humanity**

**May 13 | Glenda Creech, Wesley Village**

**May 20 | Cindy Dominick, SOLFC Backpack program**

**May 27 | the Goshorn Family, Peru**