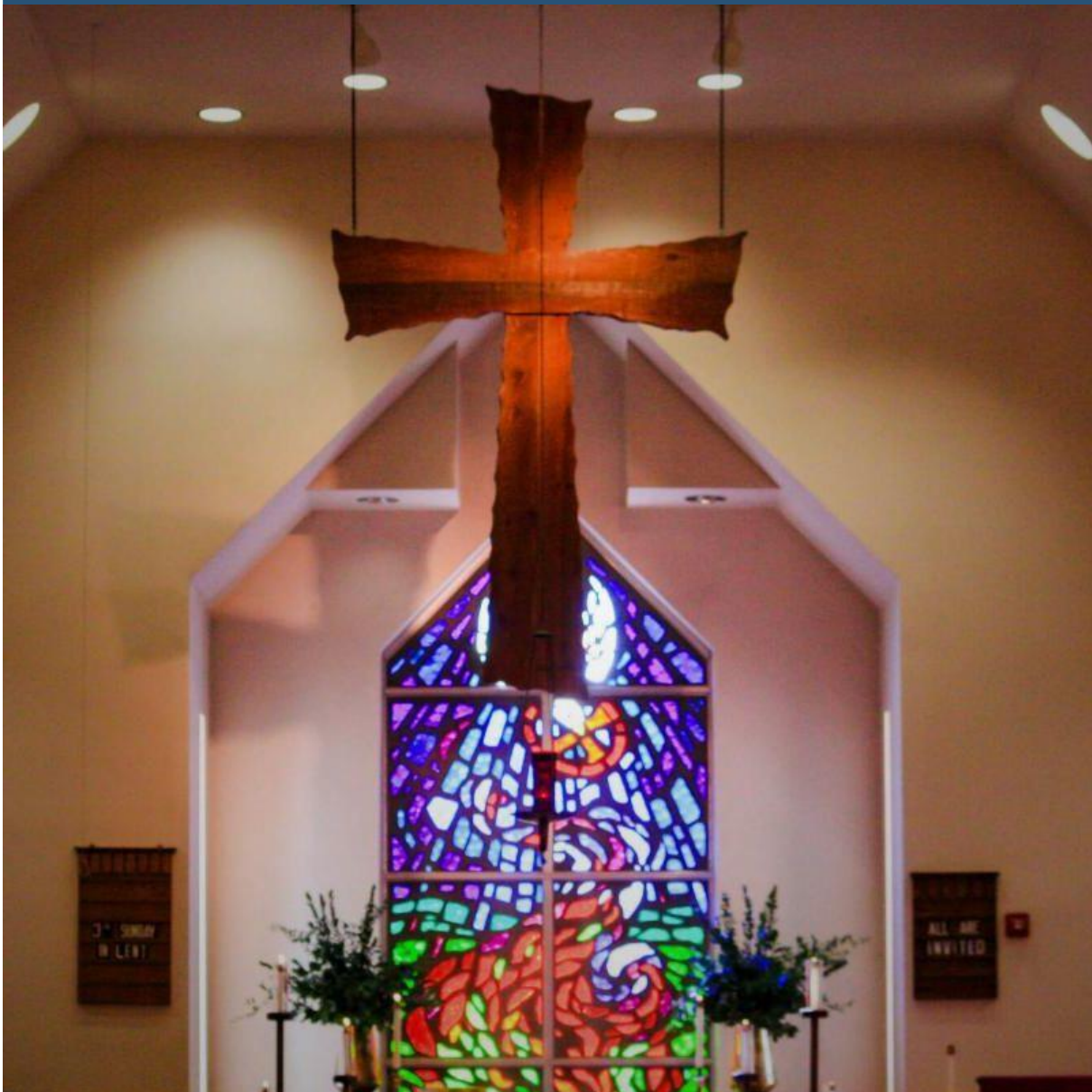




A MIGHTY FORTRESS
LUTHERAN CHURCH

(704) 392-6214

Give Today



AMF Newsletter

June 2024



Terry's Thoughts

Tony Long's journey to living each day with God... God is with him!

This is the time and my opportunity to describe how far from the Tony Long that I was blessed to see walk proudly across a stage to receive his B.A degree was from the Tony Long that I met over 15 years ago. The first meeting I had with Tony was at Lumberton Correctional facility in Polkton, N.C. At that time, his outlook on life was entirely on his existence in the present—understandable in that he was and still is serving a life sentence without possibility of parole. What promise could life hold? He told us—myself and a former AMF member—that he simply tried to survive each day by avoiding conflict with prison guards or aggressive inmates. Some days he was successful; other days, he wasn't. As months and years progressed, Tony did seek and find ways to avoid conflict; however, if life could be expressed by color—his color was gray—drab—disappointing and frustrating. There are two daughters he could not see; family he was estranged from and never or very rarely saw. Why? There were many reasons which were impacted because communication to those inside the prison environs is tightly - often even cruelly - restricted.

Now, however, over four years ago a transfer to Nash Correctional Institution, enabled him to enroll in a program offered by Southeast Baptist Theological Seminary which offered inmates the opportunity to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Ministry while serving their sentenced time. As a relationship with God had become a part of Tony's everyday existence; this was now an opportunity to deepen that relationship. Under normal circumstances, this journey to a B.A. degree would have been challenging. In Tony's situation, it meant dealing with the frustrations and restrictions of incarceration while undertaking challenging course work. After 4 long, challenging years, we saw him receive this degree. Tony, as well as the others who graduated with him, will now be sent to other prison facilities as field ministers to minister to and counsel with other inmates while at the same time continuing to serve out their sentences.

Tony had moved beyond simply trying to exist from day to day to looking forward to testifying to others that God is with them if they trust Him as Tony has done. It would not be an over statement to say that Tony's demeanor and self-assurance testified to God's Peace that afternoon as the ceremony concluded and we prepared to leave for home.



ACTIVITIES



Women of ELCA

The AMF Women's Group will not have a June meeting here at the church. Instead, we will be attending a presentation and tour at The Relatives, 2219 Freedom Drive, on Wednesday, June 5, beginning at 10:30. The Relatives works with young people in crisis. Parking may be a bit challenging. If you would like to carpool, meet at the AMF parking lot at 10:00. After the presentation we will go to lunch at a local restaurant.



The Women of AMF celebrated Bold Women's Sunday on May 19th

It was a wonderful service. The women participated in all aspects - music, singing, reading, and ushering. Our youngest "women" opened the service with a bells procession. Many thanks to Pastor Molly for helping to put the service together and sharing the sermon. And thanks to Diana for trying to keep us organized.

We honored Pastor Mary Lautensleger as our 2024 Bold Woman of the Year. Her name is now on the plaque in the hallway and we sent her a certificate of acknowledgement.



The Women's Salad Luncheon followed the service. The ladies honored the Kuekes "baby to be" with a gifts of diapers, gifts, cards and gift cards. We offered great parenting advice and good wishes. After our excellent lunch Pastor Molly helped us create prayer flags with bible verses, prayers, and blessings. These flags will be hung in the narthex. Many thanks to all who participated in any way. It was a lovely event.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

It is important that we continue to share the Children's Message during worship in this time of transition. In order to do this, help is needed from members of the congregation. NO experience or dogs required! Just a desire to share and connect with our youngest members.

Perhaps you'd like to share a favorite Bible story? We have several Children's Bibles you can read from. Or maybe you'd like to read one of the books from the Baptismal Bookshelf in the narthex. For a more traditional approach we can connect you with resources that follow the lectionary for the day. Or maybe you have your own ideas? Can we count on you? Coverage is needed for June 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30.

Contact Kathy Dukes at Kdukes1057@gmail.com to volunteer.

OUTREACH

Zoom Bags progress!

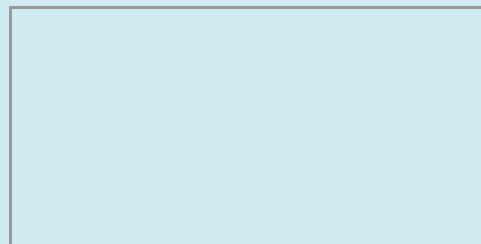
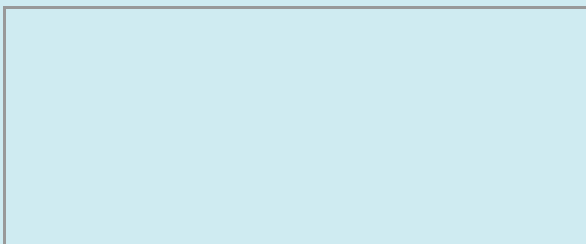


Before



After

Checkout Our Donation Center





We can now continue to support Thrift United Methodist Church:

(1) Nonperishable food items for the Food Pantry (top of cart) and

(2) Clothing (good condition) for adults and children in for Matthew's Community Closet as well as infant and baby items for "Bundles of Joy" (bottom of cart).



Items donated will be taken weekly to their church generally on Wednesday morning.

As we make plans to celebrate "Christmas in July" this year, our theme will be "Helping Our Neighbors."

We will be asking your support for these groups. More information to come later.

Hearts to Hands CLT

has several upcoming missions planned. Volunteers help serve food, supplies and hope to our inner-city homeless neighbors.

In the past year, at least 12 AMF members served on one or more of the H2H missions.

If you are interested in volunteering, mark your calendar and visit their website to sign-up:

HeartstoHandsCLT.org

They start at 11 am with volunteer arrival by 10:45 am at First Ward Park on

Saturday, June 8th
Saturday, August 10th

If you have questions, check their website above or contact Doug Wells.



Prayer Chain Update:

Did you know?
We have a group of dedicated volunteers who are on standby for any prayer requests. These volunteers spread the needs of the community through our Prayer Chain, which was recently updated and refreshed. You can contact Pastor Molly, Karen Bryant, or Diana Graham with any prayer request you may have, and they will get prayers started through the chain.

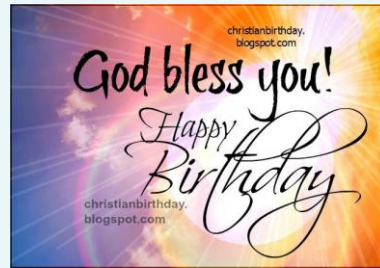


The Prayer Chain is different than our Prayer List in the bulletin, in that the prayer requests aren't as public. You can see the Prayer Chain on the bulletin board outside of the narthex.

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES AND BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday

June 2 Libby Holman
June 6 Zoe Hoffman
June 10 Donna Kretschmer
June 23 Dana (Hedrick) Nash
June 23 Matthew (Matt) Shaw
June 24 Jim McGee
June 25 Amanda Graham
June 27 Mary Lautensleger



Happy Anniversary

June 23 Brian & Jennie Pitoniak

CALENDAR

June 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10 a.m. Worship	3	4	5 10 a.m. WELCA carpool 10:30 a.m. WELCA at The Relatives	6	7	8 10:45 a.m. Hearts2Hands at First Ward Park
9 10 a.m. Worship	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 10 a.m. Worship	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 10 a.m. Worship	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						Notes:



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Contact Us

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