



# Gramling United Methodist News - January 2018

14941 Asheville Highway, PO Box 58, Gramling, SC 29348 • 864.472.2551 • gramling@umcsc.org

☞ Sundays: Classes, 10 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m. ☞ Wednesdays: Supper, 6 p.m.; Children's Music, 6:30; Adult Choir, 7 p.m.

## Landscaping Improvements Master Plan Developed

Be sure to take a look at the drawing included in this newsletter!

Nearly two years ago, at a brainstorming/planning session held in our Social Hall, church leaders were asked to come up with ideas for breathing new life into our church. One of the suggestions made that day that had widespread support in the assembled group was the upgrading of landscaping around our church grounds. This was to include development of a master plan that could be implemented as time and funds allowed. It was felt that this was one tangible way we could signal to visitors and passersby that we care about this place and that there are important things happening at Gramling Methodist. We have never in our church history had a formal landscaping plan for our grounds. Mostly, landscaping improvements that have been made through the years have been sporadic and largely disconnected. We who have been here for many years may have trouble seeing our church grounds as outsiders do. We may have become blind to the fact that the lawn is more weeds than grass or that some shrubs are overgrown to the point of becoming leggy. We need to keep in mind that the grounds around our church as well as the church itself belong to God. Part of being good stewards should include making this a special place, one that is both inviting and distinctive.

During late 2016 the Administrative Council approved funding for hiring a landscape architect to create a master plan. Now, all we had to do was find the right person. We needed someone with the spatial vision to design a plan that not only complements our buildings but also underscores and helps to project their purpose. Then, in the winter of 2017 Council member Bruce Johnson suggested that I contact former member and professional landscape architect, Jack Douglas of Ashland, Virginia to see if he would be interested in taking on our project. Jack grew up in our church in the 1950s and 60s and has gone on to become a successful landscape architect with many impressive projects in his resume. When I called Jack, he immediately expressed excitement and enthusiasm over the opportunity to work with his former church and made arrangements for a preliminary site visit in the early spring. From the beginning of this meeting, I was greatly impressed with Jack's approach to his profession and to our project. To him, landscaping is so much more than choosing the right plants for the right place. He spoke of creating spaces that would give members and visitors alike a sense of the importance of what goes on here. After hearing a general description of what we had in mind and

looking over our property, Jack proposed creating designs for three separate areas:

1. The area around the church building and the front lawn would be known as the sanctuary garden. Here, he said he hoped to develop a design that would change the empty front lawn into what he called a "sacred place" that presents one with a distinct contrast to and transition from the busy highway.

2. The grounds adjacent to the Social Hall he proposed to call the Social Hall garden and expressed the hope that those areas around the building would become "social spaces", functioning as outdoor extensions of the Social Hall itself with a wide and expansive lawn allowing room for receptions or outdoor recreation as events dictated.

3. The area surrounding the bell structure adjacent to the cemetery, he would refer to as the bell tower garden. Here, he proposed to design plantings and open spaces in patterns that would accentuate the beauty of the bell tower and highlight the importance of the site where our church began in 1908. This garden would also include a defined entry to the cemetery and special plantings framing masonry columns. Carefully placed trees would beautify the area but preserve the dramatic mountain views to the northwest of the cemetery.

The idea of three distinct zones was met favorably by Council members because it gave us the advantage of being able to implement the plan in phases. Jack began working on draft plans in the spring, and on the evening of June 29 presented them to a special meeting of the Church Council. At the meeting, he collected comments and suggestions from attendees regarding several options that his plans offered. He also visited with a representative from Roebuck Nursery to make sure of the best plant materials for our area to recommend as part of his plan. By the fall of 2017, revised individual garden plans were ready, and an overall illustrated color plan was presented to the Church Council.

In late 2017 the establishment of a landscape improvement fund was approved so that anyone wishing to donate money for this purpose may do so. But, as with all special projects, we want to emphasize that donations to this project should be in addition to and not in place of regular giving in support of our budget. Hopefully, we can begin implementation of one or more of the three garden plans in the not too distant future. — **Bruce Woodfin**

**Wednesday Night Live! resumes January 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**6 pm** – Supper in the gym for all, at no charge. Enjoy a great menu with fruit and/or vegetables, along with a little dessert. ☺  
**6:30** Children's choir practice for their spring musical.  
*Prayer meets at 5:30, Adult Choir 7 p.m.*

**Confirmation Classes** begin Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at 4pm and will continue until March 4<sup>th</sup>. The class is for 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> graders, or anyone else who is interested in being confirmed as a church member. Please contact the church office if you are interested in attending (472-2551).

If anyone would like to be a **Lay Reader**, please call the church office 472-2551. Thank You!

**Pictorial Directory:** Life Touch Photography is coming Monday and Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. Sign up in the Social Hall after worship on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>. No purchase required. This is a very helpful way for us to stay connected as a church body so we would love to see all of your smiling faces there!

**A Men 'n Ministry Conference** will be held February 16-18 at Christ UMC in Myrtle Beach. The theme will be "Come to the Water." More information to be announced.

*Pastor's  
Corner:*

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Matthew 28:18-20*

For the past couple of years the Vision Team has been on a journey towards discerning God's vision for God's church here at Gramling UMC. For many it was thought that this vision would be all about forming strategies - no, strategies come later. We have read scripture together, shared our thoughts from different readings and many prayers have been prayed. At our last council meeting in 2017, the Vision Team presented our discerned vision: **Disciples of Christ sent to share God's love in our world**, and the council approved. The rest of the story will be figuring out how to live more fully into this vision - and forming strategies to do so.

When I look and pray into our vision I see three different areas to focus upon. 1) Disciples of Christ. 2) Sent to share. 3) God's love.

Today, we focus on number one, **Disciples of Christ**. What does it mean to live in the Way of Jesus? What does it mean to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ now, in this Postmodern context? When a person orients his or her life around Jesus Christ, how does this person live? What does this person do? How does a disciple live out discipleship? If we really engage in these questions, no **really**, our lives will be rocked. This is so important, with so much potential for changing our lives. And if you think you already know the answers, then you are misunderstanding the significance of this question.

A young man who grew up in a small community where most of the people he grew up with were Christian, was asked, "What was it like? How did being a Christian make people different?" He thought for a moment and then said, "Well, I guess I really couldn't tell. Everyone in this small town was pretty nice, and honest, and friendly. You couldn't really see any difference between the Christians and those who weren't." He was describing cultural Christianity. Being nice, honest, and friendly are great actions, yet they are mild parts of our faith when we listen closely to Jesus's teachings.

If we truly follow Jesus, living the radical, life-altering lessons of the Sermon on the Mount, there would be no way we could follow Jesus without living in direct contrast to the culture around us. Jesus was a far more radical prophet and teacher than his world had ever seen - so much so that they wouldn't tolerate him, executing him instead. So if you don't want your world rocked, then don't engage this first question about living as a disciple. None of us can walk away from authentic engagement with Jesus unchanged. If you need things to remain as they are, or have a high need for social conformity, or don't think love has power, or prefer comfort over authentic life, or treasure things over life transformation, then avoid this conversation any way you can. Consider yourself warned.

*(I have used some excerpts from the book, Shift, by Mark Tidsworth, pp. 59-63)*

Next Month: **Sent to share!**

- **Pastor Rebecca**



Dear Gramling Church family,

That's exactly who you are to me right now in my journey.

You have graced our family with your prayers ever since we found mom to need surgery for cancer three years ago. I am thankful for your patience and love throughout these years. The flowers given were beautiful and definitely added joy in the celebration of her life.

Love,  
Fred & Rebecca

Dear Gramling UMC members,

I just wanted to express my thanks and gratitude for helping to make a difference for the students at our school. It has been a blessing to partner with you all to provide Christmas for some of our neediest children and families. Campobello Gramling is very thankful for your efforts, money spent on our children and your time.

Sincerely,  
Campobello Gramling Faculty & Staff



## Prayer List and Prayer Chain

**Prayer- Praises and Concerns: Call Lin Fisher (864-420-6080) or Anne Carroll (472-9434) or email [newsletter@gramlingumc.org](mailto:newsletter@gramlingumc.org) and Lin will forward your request.**

*Are any in your community suffering? They should pray. Are any celebrating? They should sing praises to God. Are any sick? They should call the elders of your church and ask them to pray. James 5:13-14a*

### Assisted Living, Nursing Home

Jane Fisher - White Oak at North Grove  
 Joyce Evington - Wesley Ct. Assisted Living  
 Jean Johnson . Skylyn Place Assisted Living  
 Rebel Brackett . Lake Emory Care  
 Helen Burrell . Woodbridge Assisted Living  
 Carl Lane . Clemson Downs  
 Carolyn Brackett . Country Christian Care, Fair Play  
 Barbara Runion . Golden Age Room 110  
 Betty Jean Campbell . The Bridge, Hendersonville

### Church: Gramling UMC

Pastor Rebecca  
 Gramling Church Leaders  
 D.S. Paul Harmon  
 Bishop Holston

**World:** District One Schools/ administration, teachers & staff  
 Immigrants/Israel/Iraq/US leaders/ SC leaders

**Military and Civil Defense** - Ed Hershberger

### Family & Friends

Bryan Johnson  
 Bob Hamilton  
 Liz Patterson . Catherine Gramling  
 Polly & wally Harper . Ruba Nix  
 The Bryan family  
 Rev. Wayne Culp & family  
 Ray Mosley . JoAnn & Hugh Foster  
 Gene Parris . Cindy Riddle's uncle  
 Donna Fowler . Paula Rhymer  
 Kim Culbreth Rouse . Beth Edmondson  
 Delia - Gloria Neely's mother  
 Tammy Jones-Cynthia Woodfin  
 Ann Henderson, Marvin Jones & Judy Vanadore . Wingos  
 Karen Harrison . Sarah Harrison's mother  
 Kay Hensdale . Sandra Wingo  
 Wayne & Nancy McAbee . Lin Fisher  
 Bob Hoover . Mary Lou Ridgeway  
 Barry Johnson . Tom Ramsay  
 Ray Simcox & Alli Hoy . Bonnie Gramling



## Happy Birthday in January!

- |                 |                   |                    |                    |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Lorna Burrell | 8 Eric Nix        | 14 Frances Shults  | 22 Joyce Evington  |
| 3 Ann Friend    | 8 Gigi Bradley    | 15 Bill Boice      | 24 Beth French     |
| 5 Troy Hodge    | 9 Ben Lanford     | 16 Brandon Johnson | 27 Kaitlyn Burrell |
| 6 Maria Goodwin | 9 Nathan Jackson  | 21 Lona Boice      | 31 Cindy Buff      |
| 7 Nancy Ramsay  | 12 Byron Barnwell |                    |                    |

### 2017 General Tithes & Offerings, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>

Budget needed: \$302,608; Received: \$274,102.00

Thank you for all your tithes and offerings throughout 2017. Our new online giving option is available on our website, [gramlingumc.org](http://gramlingumc.org). This simple, secure feature can be used for one-time gifts or for scheduling recurring donations.

### UMYF NEWS:

January 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>: Please reserve these two days to prepare for Youth Sunday. We will meet at 5 pm and the location will be announced later. **Youth Sunday will be the February 4<sup>th</sup> Service.** Anyone in the 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade is encouraged to participate!

**The Asbury Hills Retreat** is March 23-25. Please see Catherine Gramling for a flyer, and watch for more details.

**Gramling United Methodist Church**  
 PO Box 58  
 Gramling, SC 29348  
 Address Service Requested



*Pastor Rev. Rebecca Wilkins*

( want electronic copy only? e-mail [newsletter@gramlingumc.org](mailto:newsletter@gramlingumc.org) )