

THANK YOU

The sun warmly shines and a light breeze moves through the trees as I look down from my balcony watching the day pass on the busy street below. People are going about their day as you and I do. A mother pushes her son in a stroller as he excitedly points to something grabbing his attention ahead. Several people quickly walk with purpose while talking and texting on their phones. A man casually walks his dog down the street wearing none other than a Duke jacket. Some are wearing masks while others keep it around their neck or carry it in their hand, ready for when it's needed.

So much has changed for our family over the past year and here we are in a new country, under quarantine, waiting for the time to dip our toes into the unfamiliar country of Bucharest, Romania. We are ready to start making the new and unknown feel a little less scary and more like home. But it's going to take time. The scenery is different, the language is foreign, and the people are strangers. It won't always be this way, but it's in moments like this the desire for community are felt the most.

The clock tells me it's time to start dinner, but I delay that chore for a couple more minutes to look online and scroll through posts and updates from friends and family we couldn't bring with us. I needed a moment of comfort and belonging, even if found in social media. And there it was, FUMC's live Sunday service streaming on my phone. Pastor George was welcoming everyone watching, and familiar names and faces were commenting greetings to one another. It was exactly what I needed in that moment; the presence and support of my faith community.

I was given this unexpected moment to feel connected to the community of people, who in many ways, helped carry me and my family through this past year. In that moment of need I was reminded of all the ways FUMC Belmont loved and supported me and the kids while Travis was away in Afghanistan. Meals were organized and delivered. Babysitters showed up at my door. The kids were taken to church when I couldn't bring them myself. Outings for Sam and Lily were planned and carried out without my asking. Offers to help with laundry, cooking and cleaning were constantly offered. Countless texts and calls flooded my phone with words of love and support. You see, that is the beauty of church. And not just any church, but FUMC Belmont.

Many of you selflessly carried out the church's mission to be more like Jesus because you were physically the hands and feet of Jesus for me and my family this past year. I cannot thank you enough! You all have blessed my life in so many ways and I hope that when given the opportunity, I will do the same for another. Thank you for being our church family and for all your continued thoughts and prayers!

All our love from Bucharest,
Sara, Travis, Lily, Sam & Evelyn Clark



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AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

August 1	Travis Clark	August 10	Betty Pennington	August 20	Martha Taylor
August 2	Sam Pennington, Jr. Kathryn McKinney Lewis Tracy Smith	Stephanie McKinney Lewis Arlene McMurtry Sam Pruitt	August 21	Jennifer Martin Collin McAllister Joshua Millspaw	Shannon Agee
August 3	Chloe Cheshire	Mark Andrews	August 23	Jane Washam Brian Deal	Joan West
August 5	Claire Ragsdale David Gensch Bryan Jones	Chad McAllister Lynn Ellis Tobey Lowe	August 24	Colton Jones Paul Melike Claire Dunigan	Suzanne Washam
August 6	Alex Bondurant Brenda Austin Wanda Randolph	Mary Carpenter Robert Grant Melinda Russell	August 26	Anne Louise Ragsdale	Reese Luttrell
August 8	Annie Smith Payne Dylan Thompson Lora Grant	Austin Hansen Carole Bertino Tim Swing	August 27	Elle VanGastle	Erin Washam
August 9	Catherine Armstrong Mitch Wilson Ellen Adams Jamey Cauble	Erin Painter Carver Conner Corcoran Elena Benedict Erin Washam Quanna McAllister	August 28	Melvin Johnston	Elias Williams
			August 29	Gale Collins	Linda Plitch
			August 31		

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Church Family

Cindy Groner
Connie Atkins

Those in Assisted Living

Carillon Assisted Living: Trudi Kinney, Ruth Vanier
Brookdale New Hope: Tom Stephens
Lake Wylie Assisted Living: Margaret Howard
Morningside of Gastonia: Linda Weatherford

Prayers for Ramona and Ruth Robison, Ellen Robison's mother and sister
Baby Palmer and her parents Taylor and Caitlin (Casey Clark)
Prayers for Ruth Vanier, mother of Denise Campolieto Martin
Prayers for Walter Franklin, Wes's cousin (Pam Stowe)
Prayers for the McEntyres (Jennifer Martin)
Praise and thanksgiving Priscilla, Jennifer Martin's friend
Prayers for Drew Burngardner and for his mother and father, Cecelia and Fred Burngardner
Gary Cooper, father of Renee Painter
The family of Terry Sellers, John's friend and coworker (Beverly Karr)
Prayers for Jacob Obester and his family and the family of the State Trooper who died in a crash (Faith McElyea)
Kate McKenzie (Leigh Nance)
Larry and Linda Gates, friends of Richard and Wanda Randolph
Prayers for Susan Griffin, Linda Jenkins and Patsy Deese (Cindy Griffin)
7 year old Jameson Franklin (Leigh Nance)
All of the people in nursing homes and assisted living who are unable to have visitation with their loved ones (Cindy Jenkins)
Natalie, daughter of Trevis and Adrian Lunsford
Beth Geddis, friend of Cindy Groner
Prayers for Bishop Leland as he guides our conference during these tumultuous times (Mark Andrews)
Jay Petruska, friend of Shannon Agee

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Dear Church Family,

I am beyond grateful to learn that I am a recipient of the Lester L. Carpenter Scholarship! I am writing to thank you for your generous and financial support towards my education. This gift along with all your love and prayers will help me as I head to Appalachian State to follow my dream of becoming an elementary school teacher. Many of the role models in my life have been met through the church and my only hope is that my experiences at VBS and nursery have been as meaningful to the precious little ones. I have missed seeing everyone since March and can not wait to be together as a church family worshipping Jesus together again soon!

PS, Thank you so much for my FUMC blanket! It will keep me warm and remind of FUMC!

Much love, Bailey Hanafin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

READY CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Thank you for your continued generosity to our Ready Campaign. Through June, we have received contributions totaling \$493,719. Our Building and Renovation Committee has met several times this month to meet with potential contractors, visit construction sites, and review proposals. We hope to finalize our selection very soon. From there, we will work with our contractor and architect to finalize building and renovation plans. It's at this time that we'll begin to refine our plans, incorporating the ideas and suggestions we received last May in our town hall forums. All plans and proposals will come before the church again for final approval.

INTRODUCING DENISE MARTIN

On Saturday, June 27, I had the honor, the privilege, the joy, and the delight of participating in a wedding ceremony officiated by our Honorable Reverend George Ragsdale. The object of my joy and delight was being in a marriage ceremony to the most wonderful, most remarkable, and most marvelous Denise Page Campolieto. From my perspective, I thought Denise appeared absolutely stunning in her glittery electric gold wedding dress. Denise has become the answer to my many hopes and prayers.

With the coronavirus running rampant, we cautiously held the wedding ceremony at the church with only our children in attendance but we were still able to thoroughly enjoy a happy and celebratory wedding. Denise's mom was only able to participate via FaceTime and Denise's precious grandsons were not able to attend. We had hoped that 3-year-old Giovanni would be our ring bearer with a little incentive of some matchbox cars for his role.

I would like to extend a most sincere thanks to George for creating and delivering such a touching, thoughtful, and memorable wedding ceremony. And a very special thanks to Cat Bashant for performing such a tender and heartwarming rendition of Garth Brooks "To Make You Feel My Love".

Denise and I hope and pray that you will join us in celebrating our marriage union. We will be spending our time traveling, supporting and encouraging our children and our community, and faithfully serving the church through its many missions.

You don't have to congratulate me on being extremely fortunate enough to earn Denise's affection. I already know how very blessed I am and how very blessed my children are to have Denise in our lives.

Delightfully Yours,
Michael Martin

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WE ARE STILL THE CHURCH!

Outdoor Worship SUNDAYS AT 8:30 A.M.

You're invited to join us in front of the Scout Hut. You can remain in your vehicle or bring a lawn chair and social distance on the lawn. All worshippers will be required to wear a mask. Restrooms will not be available at this time.

WORSHIP ONLINE SUNDAYS AT 10:00 A.M.

We are offering live-streamed worship on our Facebook Page

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF BELMONT**
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Our Staff

George Ragsdale - Senior Pastor
Kristen Surrat - Minister of Discipleship
Marge Ligon - Director of Youth Ministry
Ellen Robison - Minister of Worship and the Arts
Linda Smith - CDC Director
Janice Pennington - Business Manager
Amanda Sloan - Child Care Coordinator
Carole Bertino - Administrative Assistant