



LONG'S CHAPEL

REACH • GROW • SERVE

February Leadership Update

Hello Long's Chapel Family,

We are excited to share with you some news and information from the 2024 Church Council, Staff, and Lay Leaders of Long's Chapel Methodist Church (LC). First, if you missed the Summary of the 2023 Congregational Meeting or the 2023 Impact Letter request either or both by emailing- tammy.wright@longschapel.com

Mark your calendars: Congregational Update Meeting on March 3

The congregational meeting will be about 12:20 pm on March 3 after Sunday morning worship services and small groups. Enjoy lunch and hear about the leadership updates as we engage in conversation about important priorities for this half of 2024 at LC.

Please pray about ways that you are engaging now and how you are going to engage. It matters. You matter. We matter. We are in this together. Things to consider: Are you attending worship and small groups weekly? Are you being Financially Generous to the One Fund for Mission and Ministry providing resources for ALL the ministry we do in the name of Jesus? Are you finding ways daily to connect with God through prayer and scripture reading? Are you using your gifts to serve our community and share the Love of Jesus?

Congregational Care Team

Our gifted volunteers, Pastor Mike Rowe and Norm White, are strengthening our care ministry by praying and visiting servants. Be patient with us as we build out processes with our new team. It is our desire to care for you whether pastorally or congregationally.

Church Council Update

The newly formed 2024 Church Council has met twice this year to orient new members, to review stats and data from the unique and quite challenging year of 2023, and to organize for the current work and manage current resources that helps set the vision for LC. There are some exciting plans taking place in this "Transition and Recovery" year. We can celebrate together a strong end of last year. Specifically, the phenomenal engagement in everything from the Festival

of Tables, the Christmas Jubilee, the Christmas Parades, and the Christmas Eve Services (almost 900 folks attended) also add a strong last quarter of financial giving shows us great signs of life here at LC.

The first quarter of the year is normally the time when we have the least engagement, attendance, and financial giving, we want to encourage you to take part in the opportunity to set new habits and practices as a church family. We want to invite everyone to use these moments to take a step forward in faith.

There are many events/happenings around LC to celebrate! Feel free to ask the front desk for a copy of the last Ministry Report.

Our Mid-week Acts 2:42 and Small Groups launch for 2024 was a huge success! Over the last two weeks, we have seen an average of 150 folks come to eat, and the healthy majority of those sticking around to attend one of the Adult GROW Groups, *LCStudents*, or *LCKids* that are offered. There have been around 25 children on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings, which is certainly a step in the right direction. Our *LCStudents* Ministry has levels of engagement like last fall but is currently being led by an all-volunteer team of gifted leaders. Our age level curriculum has been lacking in application and connection although it taught strong bible lessons. We found the Orange Curriculum to be the curriculum that would incorporate it all - strong bible lessons, application, and connection in daily life for our children. We are the only church in the county with this awesome resource for the whole family. This is an exciting step in our desire to be an intergenerational church for all generations.

Changes in the background:

This season has been significantly challenging for our Finance and Operations Department: we have established a brand-new corporation, we met all requirements for disaffiliation from the UMC (no small feat with a short timetable), we had a December external audit and many conversations with congregants. Our staff and lay leaders involved in all of this deserve our respect and appreciation.

The Church Council officially voted to put the Long's Chapel Parsonage up for sale this spring. It was a mutual decision that was made last summer if disaffiliation happened. The Westmoreland family have a cabin/house in Fines Creek that they are transitioning to in the month of February. In the future, LC will provide a housing allowance for its lead pastor. Chris and family remain grateful for their time in the parsonage, the proximity and the size blessed them immeasurably for the past 7 years. They are most grateful to continue being Haywood County residents who serve LC. *So, if you see evidence of boxes packed and U-hauls in the parsonage driveway it does not mean a pastoral change!!!*

HELP WANTED!

We always seek ways to equip our folks to use their gifts to build up the Body of Christ. Here are a few ways we need servants ASAP:

- **Digital Services Needed:** With Pastor Joey now serving our Family Life Team, we need more support for our Digital Worship Ministry for streaming and providing A/V support for Sunday mornings.
- **Online Thrift Store Sales:** We are searching for a team of folks to build out an online thrift store for choice items at our Community Pantry and in person Thrift Shop - the Second Season.
- **Grant Writer:** We are actively searching for folks who have experience and/or interest in Grant writing for our largest community impact ministries (the Child Enrichment Center and Second Season)
- **Hospitality Servants:** We have several holes in our hospitality ministry for the warm faces and hands that provide bulletins, coffee, and smiles on Sunday mornings and at special events.
- **Welcome Desk Attendants:** We are also looking for volunteers to help at the Welcome Desk during the week fielding calls and helping visitors.
- **Stewardship Team:** We are also looking for folks to be involved in a new Stewardship Team we are forming that would help us encourage a more intentional culture of generosity of gifts in our church.

These are just some of the ways you could get involved, and all of these opportunities offer training, support and equipping. We have a "team" culture at LC and want to help you find the right fit for your gifts of service.

REACH the Community • GROW disciples • SERVE those in need

It's what we do. It's who we are. God is good and His steadfast love endures forever.

Grace and Peace,

Chuck and Chris