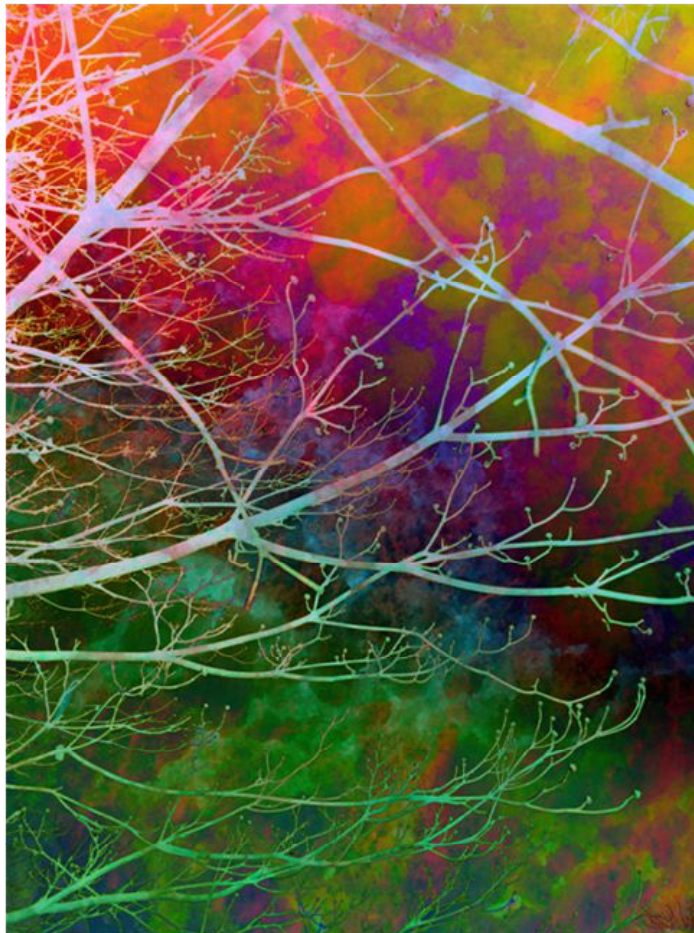


CANCER *care*

FOR SURVIVORS & THOSE WHO LOVE THEM

Third Thursdays, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.



Reaching Out, by Gail Spach

Davidson United Methodist Church

233 South Main Street ~ Davidson, NC 28036

704-892-8277

Davidson United Methodist Church
Third Thursdays (7:00 p.m.)
Rooms 212/214

2019 Meeting Topics

Date	Topic
Jan. 17	Grieving Our Losses <i>Lamentations 3:21-23</i>
Feb. 21	Prayer <i>Hebrews 4:14-16</i>
March 21	Understanding Our Feelings <i>Proverbs 3:5-6</i>
April 18	Experiencing Peace <i>Philippians 4:20</i>
May 16	Pictures of God's Healing Presence <i>Psalms 23:4</i>
June 20	The Lord Is With Us <i>Exodus 33:14-15</i>
July 18	Building Friendships <i>Job 6:14</i>
Aug. 15	Repairing Our Self Esteem <i>Psalm 139:14</i>
Sept. 19	Living Sanely in an Insane World <i>Luke 10: 38-42</i>
Oct. 17	Positive Thinking <i>Romans 12:1-2</i>
Nov. 21	Celebration and Joy <i>Psalms 30: 11-12</i>
December	HOPE AND HEALING SERVICE (no meeting)

Our Purpose

We hope to create a warm place where cancer survivors* and their co-survivors** feel welcomed. We hope to provide a safe place where you feel encouraged and free to share anything on your mind. We admit that through the challenges of life, we sometimes struggle with our faith. We are able to share these struggles and speak honestly here. This is not a place where we will give advice but simply a safe place where love, support, and prayers will be offered.

* Survivors are defined as anyone once diagnosed with any kind of cancer, whether it is in remission, not yet, or not expected. Because, every single day, you are a Survivor!

** Co-survivors are defined as anyone who walks along side a cancer survivor. We use the term co-survivor in an attempt to acknowledge the deep impact that this journey has on individuals who choose everyday to remain ever present as a source of compassion, care, and support in the life of a cancer survivor.



Meeting Plan

- 6:45 p.m. - Gathering with Refreshments
- 7:05 p.m. - Opening Prayer & Purpose
- 7:10 p.m. - Introduce the monthly topic with some discussion
- 7:30 p.m. - Depending on topic, break into groups
(Survivors/Co-survivors) for further discussion
- 8:20 p.m. - Prayer
- 8:30 p.m. - Dismiss

Per Facilitators Discretion: Some months we will remain all together as survivors and co-survivors for the duration of the meeting.

References and Resources

We do not see this as a group that will give advice or attempt to “fix” people. However when a group of survivors and co-survivors unites, their experience and connections can have the ability to assist others in their journey as a survivor or co-survivor.

Our primary purpose will remain providing a safe place where love, support, and prayers are offered. We do anticipate that through the sharing of our stories and the group’s experience of members newly diagnosed that there may be a time when resources are being sought out by a group member. Should this occur we will have built in time away from the primary focus of the group to discuss these and similar issues.

Leadership

Kelly Ellis is a Survivor. Kelly was diagnosed with cervical cancer in May of 2007. She was then diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic breast cancer in November of 2012, which she continues to live with. Kelly was also diagnosed with leukemia in June of 2014 and most recently a glioma in August of 2017. Kelly is a dual citizen (USA & Canada), is married to Louie who works with NASCAR, and has three incredible children: Jack, Hogan, and Iliya. Kelly is a newer member of DUMC. Kelly is also a Registered Nurse who specializes in Oncology and currently holds a staff nurse position at Wake Forest Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center.



Karla Tuttle is a Survivor, diagnosed with pre-cancerous cells in the lung in 2006, which resulted in a lobectomy removing the upper right lobe. In 2008, Karla was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer and in 2016 and 2017 with melanoma. Karla retired in November of 2016 from her Career, which was spent mostly in management and training in the real estate and title insurance industry. Karla has one grown son, Nic Glyshaw, who is the Youth Director at DUMC. Karla is a native mid-westerner from Illinois but spent most of her adult life in Indianapolis, IN. She enjoys cooking (especially for the DUMC youth group on Sunday nights), reading, movies and traveling.



Bob McIntosh is a Survivor, diagnosed with prostate cancer in September of 2016. Bob underwent HIFU (High Intensity Focused Ultrasound) and his PSA is now 0! He is still having some lingering issues, but they are resolving and he hopes to be on the "no cancer" path with no side effects. Bob is an attorney and joined DUMC in 1991 when there were about 300 members. Bob is married to Ann, and he faithfully teaches the Bill Hight Sunday School class each week.

Ann McIntosh is Co-survivor to her husband Bob. Ann provided care for her husband during his illness. Bob and Ann have been married for 25+ years and have two adult children, Bo and Sarah. Ann works at The McIntosh Law Firm and enjoys reading, running, swimming, and supporting the Gamecocks.



In loving memory and gratitude:



Thad Chesson was diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer in June of 2016. He died Nov. 20, 2018. However, he didn't "lose his battle with cancer." We at Cancer Care believe cancer never wins. Thad proved this. He fully lived his life of faith every single day. His compassionate leadership was vital as we began Cancer Care at DUMC. He is survived by his beloved wife, Susan, and sons, Charlie (and Melinda) and Jake...and us.

Leadership Support

Rev. Linda Zastovnik is Co-survivor to her friend Kelly Ellis. She has provided care for her for the past 8+ years. Linda is the Pastor for Faith Formation and Congregational Care at Davidson United Methodist Church. Linda's passion, determination, and dedication is what has made this ministry a reality for so many individuals who have found themselves in the unexpected role of survivor or co-survivor.



Linda serves in a supportive role to the leadership team and we are so grateful to her for her tireless work in getting this ministry off the ground. Thank you Pastor Linda!

Introduction

Hearing the words “you have cancer” changes a person’s life as they know it forever. We come together - as survivors and co-survivors - in order to share our experiences with each other. We hope by doing so, you will find a safe place here with us.

Our vision is to create a warm place where survivors and co-survivors are welcomed, where expression of emotion is valued and respected, and where we can be honest about our struggles. We do not see this as a group that will give advice or attempt to “fix” people, simply a safe place where love, support, and prayers are offered.

Please share with us what you want to see and what you need from our monthly gathering. Our hope is that through this ministry we will grow closer together as those who have been touched by cancer.

Our Topics

Each month, we will highlight a topic from one of these three areas:

Living with Strong Feelings

Cancer threatens everything: our health, our work, our independence, our future, our energy, our life. The threats that come with cancer and its treatment evoke powerful feelings in us that we may not be used to experiencing. We find ourselves on an emotional roller coaster experiencing everything from grief, anger, fear and depression, to hope, gratitude and joy. These topics will help us to talk about these many feelings, which can help us live with them constructively.

Experiencing New Challenges to Our Faith

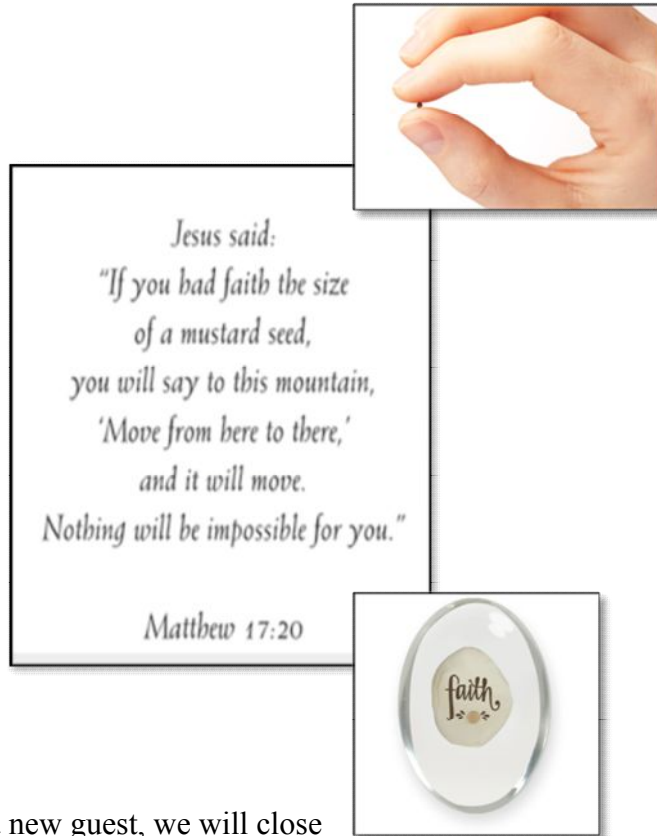
A diagnosis of cancer can leave a person and their family shaken spiritually. The world as we once understood it may no longer exist. Old explanations no longer seem to fit or to make sense. It seems as if everything is up for grabs. Cancer presents new challenges to our faith. We may find ourselves asking frightening questions about God. We may find ourselves unable to pray. We find ourselves seeking healing. We are not alone with these experiences. These topics will help us to discover that it is good to ask hard questions, that we can ask others to pray when we cannot, and that we have been invited by God to ask for healing and help in times of need.

Changing Perspectives

Cancer challenges us emotionally and spiritually. It also challenges us intellectually. We find ourselves searching for meaning and understanding. We find ourselves rethinking our values and priorities. These topics will help us to develop new abilities to accept ourselves as limited and finite. Yet, in the midst of the danger that cancer presents, we will discover opportunities for growth.

The Message of the Mustard Seed

If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, nothing will be impossible. The smallest bit of faith can move mountains.



Our Ritual

When we have a new guest, we will close the meeting with The Lord's Prayer. As we pray, we will pass a faith stone around our circle. These faith stones contain within them a tiny mustard seed. We pass the stones as we pray with each person present holding the stone for a moment. Following the prayer, the stone is given to our new guest as a symbol of the support offered through this Cancer Care Ministry. Most of all, it is a reminder of God's promise that with faith - no matter how small - nothing is impossible. **Nothing.**

Prayer

Some people find the imagination a useful tool in prayer. Picture Jesus healing people, and then see him walking toward you, looking at you with deep compassion, and stretching out his hands toward you. You could imagine that Jesus takes both your hands in his. Feel the warmth, the love, the sense of security, come what may. There is a Celtic encircling prayer which you could say as you imagine this:

I place my hands in yours, Lord,
I place my hands in yours.
I place my will in yours, Lord,
I place my will in yours.
I place my days in yours, Lord,
I place my days in yours.
I place my thoughts in yours, Lord,
I place my thoughts in yours.
I place my heart in yours, Lord,
I place my heart in yours.
I place my hands in yours, Lord,
I place my hands in yours.

Angela Ashwin

I am, O God, a jumbled mass of motives; One moment I am adoring you, and the next I am shaking my fist at you. I vacillate between mounting hope, and deepening despair. I am full of faith, and full of doubt. I want the best for others, and am jealous when they get it. Even so, God, I will not run from your presence. Nor will I pretend to be what I am not. Thank you for accepting me with all my contradictions. Amen.

Richard J. Foster

Prayer

Dear God,
I feel such pain, anxiety, and depression.
I know this is not Your will for me,
And yet my mind is held in chains by fear and paranoia.
I surrender my life, right now, to You.
Take the entire mess, all of it,
Now too complicated to explain to anyone
But known by You in each detail.
Do what I cannot do.
Lift me up.
Give me a new chance.
Show me a new light.
Make me a new person.
Dear God,
This depression frightens me.
Dear God,
Please bring me peace. Amen.

Marianne Williamson

I shall look at the world through tears. Perhaps I shall see things
that dry-eyed I could not see.

Nicholas Wolterstorff

Praying a Bible Text

Repeat these biblical promises slowly many times, then silently many times, allowing the meaning to deepen into feeling, binding your soul to the text.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.” *John 14:27*

“It is I, be not afraid.” *John 6:20*

“Abide in me and I in you.” *John 15:4*

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. *Deuteronomy 33:27*

“I am with you always.” *Matthew 28:20*

In quietness and in trust shall be your strength. *Isaiah 30:15*

Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, this is the way, walk in it. *Isaiah 30:21*

“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” *Deuteronomy 31:6*

Prayers are from the book, *All Will Be Well: A Gathering of Healing Prayers*. Augsburg Books, 1998.

Prayer

When we experience illness either as a survivor or as a co-survivor, our resources are stretched to the utmost. We struggle with feelings of fear, anxiety, helplessness, and desperation. We do what we can, but often it just is not enough. We need help from beyond ourselves.

Since biblical times, believers have looked to God for healing and wholeness. At times prayer comes to us spontaneously. We find it easy to turn in faith to a loving God, expressing in our own words what is on our hearts and minds. But at other times we are overcome by fatigue, stress, doubts, and confusion. The words will not come.

Prayer, whether someone else's words or our own, releases the healing power of God into our situation.

May God be with us as we seek healing for ourselves and our loved ones. May God bless us with the hope that in spite of illness, distress, and tears, all is well.



The Mountain Lion

What's it like to go through cancer treatment? It's something like this: one day, you're minding your own business, you open the fridge to get some breakfast, and OH MY GOODNESS THERE'S A MOUNTAIN LION IN YOUR FRIDGE!!!

Wait, what? How? Why is there a mountain lion in your fridge? NO TIME TO EXPLAIN. RUN! THE MOUNTAIN LION WILL KILL YOU! UNLESS YOU FIND SOMETHING EVEN MORE FEROCIOUS TO KILL IT FIRST!

So you take off running, and the mountain lion is right behind you. You know the only thing that can kill a mountain lion is a bear, and the only bear is on top of the mountain, so you better find that bear. You start running up the mountain in hopes of finding the bear. Your friends desperately want to help, but they are powerless against mountain lions, as mountain lions are godless killing machines. But they really want to help, so they're cheering you on and bringing you paper cups of water and orange slices as you run up the mountain and yelling at the mountain lion, "GET LOST, MOUNTAIN LION, NO ONE LIKES YOU," and you really appreciate the support, but the mountain lion is still coming.

Also, for some reason, there's someone in the crowd who's yelling, "That's not really a mountain lion, it's a puma," and another person yelling, "I read that mountain lions are allergic to kale, have you tried rubbing kale on it?"

As you're running up the mountain, you see other people fleeing their own mountain lions. Some of the mountain lions seem comparatively wimpy, they're half grown and only have three legs or whatever, and you think to yourself, why couldn't I have gotten one of those mountain lions? But then you look over at the people who are fleeing mountain lions the size of a

monster truck with huge prehistoric saber fangs, and you feel like a jerk for even thinking that. Besides, who in their right mind would want to fight a mountain lion, even a three-legged one?

Finally, the person closest to you, whose job it is to take care of you, maybe your spouse, or a parent, or sibling, or best friend, your co-survivor comes barging out of the woods and jumps on top of the mountain lion, whaling on it and screaming, "STOP TRYING TO EAT MY PERSON!" And the mountain lion punches your co-survivor right in the face. Now your co-survivor is rolling around on the ground clutching their nose, they've bought you some time, but you still need to get to the top of the mountain.

Eventually you reach the top, finally, and the bear is there. Waiting. For both of you. You rush right up to the bear, and the bear rushes the mountain lion, but the bear has to go through you to get to the mountain lion, and in doing so, the bear **TOTALLY KICKS YOUR BUTT**, but not before it also punches your co-survivor in the face. And your co-survivor is now staggering around with a black eye and bloody nose, and saying, "Can I get some help, I've been punched in the face by two apex predators and I think my nose is broken," and all you can say is, "I'M KIND OF BUSY...IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED I'M FIGHTING A MOUNTAIN LION!"

Then, IF YOU ARE LUCKY, the bear leaps on the mountain lion and they are locked in epic battle until finally the two of them roll off a cliff edge together, and the mountain lion is dead.

Maybe. You're not sure. It fell off the cliff, but mountain lions are crafty. It could come back at any moment.

And all your friends come running up to you and say, “That was amazing! You’re so brave! We’re so proud of you! You didn’t die! That must be a huge relief!”

Meanwhile, you blew out both your knees, you’re having an asthma attack, you twisted your ankle, and a bear has mauled you. And everyone says, “Boy, you must be excited to walk down the mountain!” And all you can think as you stagger to your feet is, “Screw this stupid mountain. I never wanted to climb it in the first place.”

Caitlin Feeley

*At Cancer Care,
we laugh a lot, too.*

Sometimes, through our tears.

For more information about Cancer Care and other caring ministries offered through Davidson United Methodist Church, contact Rev. Linda Zastovnik:

lzastovnik@davidsonumc.org.

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