

CANCER *care*

FOR SURVIVORS & THOSE WHO LOVE THEM

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



Cross of Hope and Healing, by Gail Spach

Davidson United Methodist Church

233 South Main Street ~ Davidson, NC 28036

704-892-8277

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 alongside 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.

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.

Meeting Plan

We are currently meeting via Zoom. Contact Sherry Carpenter at scarpenter@davidsonumc.org for more information.

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.

The Message of the Mustard Seed

Jesus said:
“For truly I tell you,
if you have faith the size
of a mustard seed,
you will say to this mountain,
‘Move from here to there,’
and it will move;
and nothing will be impossible
for you.”

Matthew 17:20



Our Ritual

When we have a new guest, we close the meeting with The Lord's Prayer. As we pray, we will pass a faith stone around our circle. These stones contain within them a tiny mustard seed. We pass along 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.**

Leadership

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.

Leadership Support

Rev. Jim Humphries is the Pastor of Congregational Care at Davidson United Methodist Church, and helps to give spiritual leadership and guidance to Cancer Care's monthly gatherings. Jim has walked alongside and ministered with dozens of church members and dear friends over the years in their cancer journeys; most especially his mother, who died of pancreatic cancer in 1997.



In loving memory and gratitude:



Thad Chesson was diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer in June of 2016. He died November 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.

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.

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.

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

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint. *Isaiah 40:31*

Do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. *Isaiah 41:10*

The Lord is good,
a stronghold in a day of trouble;
he protects those who take refuge in him. *Nahum 1:7*

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” *Jesus, from Matthew 11:28*

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

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” *Jesus, from John 14:27*

In all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 8:37-39

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience. *Colossians 1:11*

The Serenity Prayer

by Reinhold Niebuhr

God, give me grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time,
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it,
trusting that You will make all things right,
if I surrender to Your will,
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
and supremely happy with You forever in the next.
Amen.

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

jhumphries@davidsonumc.org

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