



SPRING 2019

THE TIE THAT BINDS

A publication of First Baptist Church
Greensboro celebrating
our homebound members

Blest, Indeed, Is the Tie that Binds

by Steve Sumerel

I know that most of the readership of this publication are seasoned enough to remember the Carol Burnett Show. There was much about the show that kept me glued to my television. It was of course, very funny, but there were many shows that could make you laugh. For me, the thing that made this show special was the way the cast conveyed their genuine love for each other. They obviously loved being on stage together and sharing the wonderful chemistry that produced some of the most memorable moments on the small screen.

At the end of each show, Carol would tug on her ear and sing her parting song with these words:

**I'm so glad we had this time together,
Just to have a laugh or sing a song,
Seems we just get started and before you know it,
Comes the time we have to say so long.**

I found myself humming that song as I write my last article for The Tie That Binds. I am tremendously happy that I had the time to get to know so many of you. We did share many a laugh, and yes, I even sang a song or two with you...Christmas Carols are songs. But, we shared so much more.

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Blest, Indeed, Is the Tie that Binds *(continued from p. 1)*

My relatively short tenure as your Minister of Congregational Life allowed me to travel with many of you on the most difficult parts of your journey. We have sat in quiet vigil together around a loved one about to depart. We have prayed in hospital rooms and living rooms. We have hugged, we have listened, and we have leaned on one another, as we experienced together the holy ground of God's presence in our midst.

So, why in the world would I want to leave such opportunities behind? Of course, there are many layers to the answer to that question, but the simple answer may be best. I have absolutely no doubt in my mind or soul that the time has come for me to retire. I am fortunate that my retirement is a decision to move to what's next, not a retreat from what was. Marie and I are looking forward to discovering the next chapter in our lives. We have plans, and are enjoying making long-conceived trips and dreams a reality soon.

In making such a decision, I must acknowledge the cost of it. It is not easy leaving such a vital ministry. But, I leave with a heart filled with gratitude for the trust you have granted to me. I have a mind filled with beautiful stories of your lives, and I have a soul made richer by walking alongside you. Indeed, it is not easy to walk away from such gifts. It is not easy to leave such an opportunity for ministry; but as the song says, "there comes the time to say so long."

Along with you, I look forward to learning who will assume the responsibilities of Senior Adult Ministry. I will pray for that person with all my heart, knowing that the love our church has for you will be reflected well in the ministry of the one who is to come.

A Community of faith is a unique assembly. Our connection is not based only on common goals or interests. The connection that ties a community of faith together is holy. It is also timeless and does not yield to the distances that may come between us.

Surely something as mundane as a retirement will not sever the bonds of love that we have shared, and I shall not let time or distance come between the love we have for one another.

Upon this reflection on the meaning of our bonds, it dawns on me that perhaps I am humming the wrong song...it's not Carol Burnett's theme song that defines this moment for us. It is... well...the song from which this publication borrows its name; **Blest Be the Tie that Binds**.

**Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship our spirit finds
Is like to that above.
When we asunder part
It gives us inward pain
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.**

So, I shall not tug on my ear, but I will keep a prayer in my heart for all of you; a prayer that sings in harmony with the sweet prayer of our parting song.

Blessings to you all,
Steve



IT MUST BE SPRING

Hush, can you hear it?
The rustling in the grass,
Bringing you the welcome news that
Winter's day is past.

Soft, can you feel it?
The warm caressing breeze,
Telling you the sticky buds
Are bursting on the trees.

Look, can you see them?
The primrose in the lane.
Now you must believe it -
Spring is here again.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/it-must-be-spring> (May Fenn)

Happy Birthday to You!

JANUARY

- 5 - **Esther Matthews**, 3504 Flint Street, Apt. C 105, Greensboro, NC 27405
- 6 - **Carolyn Gilliland**, 1208 New Garden Road, Brighton Gardens, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 11 - **Gertrude Royal**, Abbotswood Assisted Living, 3504 Flint Street, Rm 122, Greensboro, NC 27405
- 15 - **Elise Berkley**, 1408 Garland Drive, Greensboro, NC 27408
- 15 - **Frances Bolen**, 4061 Fountain Grove Drive, High Point, CN 27265-8058
- 20 - **Kathryn Hewitt**, 1714 Noble Place, Greensboro, NC 27408
- 31 - **Ceil Sue**, 1307 Hobbs Road, Greensboro, NC 27410

FEBRUARY

- 2 - **Marie Jones**, Arboretum at Heritage Green, #C9, 709 Meadowood Street, Greensboro, NC 2749
- 18 - **Leroy Hartgrove**, 2216-C New Garden Road, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 26 - **Dixie Wimberley**, 2434 Wanstead Court, Richmond, VA 23238

MARCH

- 1 - **Nell Beavers**, 4100 Spring Drive Healthcare, Rm 1, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 15 - **Vernon Wimberley**, 2434 Wanstead Court, Richmond, VA 23238
- 22 - **Lib Smith**, 76 Mansfield Circle, Greensboro, NC 27455
- 22 - **Ruth Howerton**, Friends Home West, #4110, 6100 West Friendly Ave, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 28 - **Jerry Thompson**, 4803 Trailwood Drive, Greensboro, NC 27407
- 31 - **Edith Emonds**, 218 Mistletoe Drive, Greensboro, NC 27403

APRIL

- 3 - **Eleanor Gibson**, Friends Home, Woolman #621, 925 New Garden Road, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 5 - **Jeanne Blakely**, P.O. Box 1795, Jamestown, NC 27282
- 12 - **W.M. Kirkman**, Well Spring Memory Care, 4100 Well Spring Drive, Greensboro, NC 27410
- 21 - **Paul Stewart**, 1575 John Knox Drive, 2-PB 111, Colfax, NC 27235

The Tie That Binds

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IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering...

We honor those homebound who have gone
to live with the Lord.

We were graced by their presence.

Garland Gordon 9/6/2018	Carolyn Grassi 12/26/2018
William L. Johnson 9/11/2018	Effie Rowan 12/24/2018
Arlene Morrison 10/31/2018	Warren Bass 3/4/2019
Betty Campbell 11/12/2018	Joe McLean 2/27/2019
Glorine Luper 12/5/2018	Wesley Adams 3/22/2019
Lois Edinger 12/20/2018	Freida Rushton 3/28/2019

Teresa retired as our church librarian in January, but she certainly left her mark on it. She went to great lengths in seeking ways to connect books to people, but more importantly, she sought ways to connect the people who were reading the books. **What a unique place**



is a church library. Our community of faith is, of course, primarily built around our love of God, but there is much more that connects us. The church library brings together those who love the creative gifts generated by authors of all descriptions. So, a library is much more than a place to find a book; it is a place to find connection. And one who understands this, and seeks to create the environment for connection is my definition of a truly gifted librarian

We will miss Teresa's gifts, even as we wish her well in her retirement. Let us strive now to greet Anita Cranford and welcome her and the gifts she brings to this important hub of our faith community...*our beloved library.*