

*The Methodist Messenger*  
August/September 2021  
Whiteville United Methodist Church

Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Holy Communion Service/Bible Study - 6:00 p.m.



**Ready, Set, Go**

Like every other church, the ministries of Whiteville UMC have been affected because of over a year with COVID. Some ministries, like some of the Sunday School classes, have persevered using new technologies. Some others have resumed meeting in person on a limited basis.

However, some areas will need to be rebuilt...relaunched if you will. For example, the Chancel Choir will need to be almost completely relaunched. Children, Youth, and Young Adult Ministries must be revamped. We will also need to work on other discipleship activities and mission events. Many of our regular worshipping membership may never return to the sanctuary because of health concerns.

Things will never return to what we called normal before the pandemic. Long story, short: After the summer vacations and travel plans are complete and children have returned to school, we will do our best to reboot, relaunch, rebuild this ministry life of Whiteville UMC. And to accomplish that feat, we will need everyone working together to live out a new vision reality!

Sometimes, we tend to want to limit the people that God can use. We think that God only wants to use those people who we think are well-educated and highly qualified in his service. "He would never choose me to do anything for Him. The Almighty Everlasting Omnipotent God of the Universe would never stoop to ask me to do anything for Him. He has probably even forgotten that I exist." Not true! God calls all of us into his service.

Jeremiah was a young fellow, presumably just hanging out one day in his hometown when the Lord God spoke to him. God said, "Jeremiah, I've known you since you were forming in your mother's womb, and in fact, I decided what I wanted you to do for me before you were even born." And like Jeremiah, God knew each one of us before we were born. He has a plan for us. Some people in the Bible, like King David, John the Baptist, and Paul, had specific purposes. God may have already given you a specific task. If so, do it with His help in a way that will glorify Him. He may not reveal what His plan is for others of us at what we would consider to be the most appropriate time, but rest assured He will let you know what you are to do. But it will be when He is ready for you to know. If you don't feel, at this time, that you know what God has called you to do, then seek to fulfill the commandment that Christ gave all of us in which he said, love one another as I have loved you. If we follow that commandment, we will always be in God's will.

But, when God does call you to do something specific for Him, you, like Jeremiah, may think that you are not worthy or can do what God is asking of you. Jeremiah told God that he didn't think that he had the ability to do what God wanted him to. He gave the excuse that he was too young. What excuses have we given God for not answering His call. You see, we can give God excuses. He calls us, and He gives us the choice as to whether we will answer. God wants us on His team and will offer us a position, but He won't force us to play for Him if we don't want to. And some of us may not want to. But oh, what a great feeling it is, when you know that you're playing on the winning team! Think about it! What an opportunity?! How many times do you get to choose to play for a team that you know ahead of time is going to win? What a great deal!

But as I mentioned earlier, you might not think that God could possibly want you. You may think: So, what's so special about me? I don't have any great abilities or knowledge that I can use to work for God. But hold on. Let's think about that line of thinking for a second. Who says that you must have super-abilities, super-strength, or super-knowledge to work for God? Look whom Christ surrounded Himself with. He chose fishermen, tax collectors, and the like to be His disciples. These were common working people like you and me.

It's during the times that I forget to rely on Him that I feel inadequate and incapable of the work that God has for me to do. But then I remember that God will not give me (or you) a job that he won't equip me to do. He gives us the strength and the resources we need to accomplish the job that He has assigned to us. He will empower us over any obstacle and give us the confidence to go forth for Him. In fact, we may be insulting God when we second guess His choice, when He chooses us for a job. He knows better than we do what we are capable of accomplishing - with His help. God will use us to further his kingdom and will walk next to us the whole way if we will only let Him. Remember, as some people like to say...*God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called.*

Keep your ears open to hear what the Holy Spirit is calling you to do at Whiteville. What is God calling you to do and be inside the church, and out in our community? It's exciting to think about, isn't it? **Ready, Set, Go!**

*Pastor Terry*

*“Reaching People, to Teach People, to reach People”*

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Like Covid infections, our attendance, after improving for several months, has stalled. Our average worship service attendance remains at 58. Including YouTube views we are averaging 84. That total is the same as our average attendance in 2019.

Our offerings are consistent with last year. As usual we are significantly behind in our budget. Due to our annual insurance premium and other one-time large expenses we have spent \$17,034 more than our offerings. Because of this we have not paid any of our apportionments. With these lump sum payments behind us and summer vacation ending, we hope to begin making apportionment payments in the fall.

Credit cards for the church have been received for church expenses and the Food Pantry. Use of the church card will be administered by the church secretary and require approved vouchers similar to our existing policies for church spending. If you have church expenses that cannot be paid by check, please contact the church secretary.

Thank you members and friends for being steady with your stewardship efforts as we strive to be the church in our community and beyond.

*Tom Leggett, Finance Chairperson*

### Serving in August & September

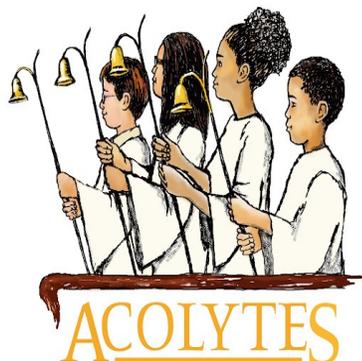
#### Acolytes

#### August 2021

1<sup>st</sup>- Grace High  
8<sup>th</sup>- Emily McLam  
15<sup>th</sup>- Anna & Sophie  
Bivens  
22<sup>nd</sup>- Andrew Bullard  
29<sup>th</sup>- Peyton Hunt

#### September 2021

5<sup>th</sup>- Emily Sauls  
12<sup>th</sup>- Andrew Bullard  
19<sup>th</sup>- Peyton Hunt  
26<sup>th</sup>- Sophie Bivens



## OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Several years ago, Hilda Pridgen left stock to Whiteville United Methodist Church. The Church Council decided half of the annual dividends be used by Trustees and half for local outreach ministries.



Pat Ray, our Parish Nurse, was contacted by Jeremy Simmons, Chaplain at the CRHS, about a new collaboration between the Donarye Cancer Care Center and the Faith-Based Community to help cancer patients who do not have consistent access to food and clean water.

This collaboration will facilitate the ability to provide cancer patients with healthier food, clean water, and other important resources. Patients receive education on how nutrition plays a key role in their treatment. The list of foods takes into consideration side effects during treatment which challenge nutrition and hydration.

Our church donated a lengthy list of food items at the end of June as this hospital pantry begins. Items requested, in multiples of 10, are shelf-stable, fruit, vegetable, rice, breakfast – and 10 can openers. Each church will be asked to contribute once a year. The nearly \$500 for these purchases is from the Pridgen Endowment and is not part of money raised in the church budget. Thanks to Tammy and Steven McCullum for handling pickup and delivery of the groceries.

## Whiteville United Methodist Women - Annual Giving in 2021

It began as the soup makers stirred gallons and gallons of soup. It continued as members of the congregation purchased frozen soup to consume as they wished. We were blessed with over \$1,400 raised in February to support our outreach to others.

You may be interested to see that we just sent checks, between \$250 and \$100 each, to these local and national non-profit groups. Thanks to each of you for participating in our efforts.

- Methodist Home for Children Foundation
- Columbus County Literacy Council
- Wesley Pines Methodist Retirement Home
- Partners in Ministry (Laurinburg NC)
- Families First
- MATCH Prison Ministry (Mothers and their Children)
- Mission of Hope - Rotifunk Hospital (\$360 specifically given for Madonna Project)

In addition to the groups listed above, we pledge support for the national and international work of UMW. We provide supplies to Whiteville City schools, Whiteville preschool. Debbie Conway leads our remembrance gifts in the Fall for some members of our congregation.

*Carolyn Hankins, WUMW*  
treasurer





## Shoe Collection

What do all these diverse people have in common? They are wearing shoes!! In our community everyone has shoes, probably more shoes than they can or currently are wearing. You can share your abundance and help PARTNERS IN MINISTRY, a national UMC project located in Laurinburg, raise funds.

Donated shoes – men,, women, youth, children, dress, casual, sport – will be used by a shoe distributor to teach people how to manage a business. The funds raised as we clean our closets will be utilized by Partners in Ministry toward building a better facility to serve their area of southeastern North Carolina.

Please gather new or gently used shoes, put a rubber band around each pair, and take them to the church office. The goal for our church is to collect a minimum of 10 bags of shoes with each bag holding 25 pairs. Feel free to ask your family, neighbors, business associates, and others to join the endeavor.

Shoes will be collected through September. We have already sent several pairs to Laurinburg. The collection project is led by the North Carolina Conference and United Methodist Women. Director of Partners in Ministry is Dr. Melba McCallum, a deaconess in the UMC.

For more information, contact Debbie Sellars or Carolyn Hankins.

## NURTURE COMMITTEE

After an extended period of time without much activity associated with our committee, we have had a busy time in the last two months! We provided a meal for one of the nights of Vacation Bible School and several of our members helped in other capacities at VBS. It was a big success and I think the children that came learned a lot about God and the Bible while having a good time! A big thank you to Karen Dawsey for directing VBS and to Dr. Hunt for teaching the lessons each night! Also, thanks to all the volunteers who cooked, supervised and instructed for 4 days.

We were honored to provide a luncheon for the Bill Brooks family before his funeral service. Thanks to all the Nurture members and others in the church that provided food and flowers.

We will be meeting in August to discuss upcoming fall events.

We will resume Children’s Sunday School classes on the first Sunday in August- Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 am. Please invite or bring any children- friends, neighbors, grandchildren- all are welcome!

In Christian love, *Debbie Conway*



## Worship Committee

Despite summer’s hot, sultry days and rain showers, we, at WUMC, continue to be blessed with beautiful, meaningful music, lovely flowers, dedicated ushers, and those who assist with the soundboard. On behalf of the Worship Committee, I also want to extend a special “thank you” to our young people who take time from the “busy-ness” of their own schedules to serve as our acolytes and participate in this opportunity week after week. As we thank Mrs. Elizabeth High for her dedication with the acolyte ministry in our church, we also want to welcome Mrs. Ann Simmons who will now replace Mrs. High and serve in this capacity. As a member of the “Methodist family,” please consider volunteering to serve occasionally as an acolyte by letting Mrs. Simmons or Morgan in the church office know.

Graduation Sunday was celebrated earlier this summer with five of our members graduating: To Grace High, Emily McLam, Anna Bivens (high school), Mac McGougan (college), and Beverly Justice (PhD), we congratulate you and extend our best wishes as you continue to grow and use the gifts and talents God has given you.

Preparations will soon begin for our annual “Homecoming” which will be October 10, 2021. This year, we are fortunate to have Reverend Berry Barbour, who served WUMC from 1995-1999, as our guest speaker. Please begin now to spread the word so that past, present, and future members can plan to share this day with us.

The Worship Committee will meet Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 5:00 pm in the Parlor for the purpose of organizing Homecoming and requesting or changing our budget needs for 2022. Please mark your calendars!

*Betty Gray, Chair*

**Bishop Hope Morgan Ward** will retire in September.

At NCC Annual Conference in June, we celebrated the life and ministry of Bishop Hope. She had planned to retire in 2019, but that was delayed by Covid-19 and the postponement of Jurisdictional Conferences and General Conference.

Bishops are elected at Jurisdictional Conference to serve within that Jurisdiction and, without replacements, several of the planned retirements were delayed.

Temporarily linking a Bishop with more than one Annual Conference this fall will allow retirements to take place. For the North Carolina Conference, Bishop Leonard Fairley will be linked to serve here as well as in his current appointment to Kentucky and Red Bird Missionary Conference in Kentucky. Bishop Fairley served in our Conference before being elected Bishop so he is a very logical choice.

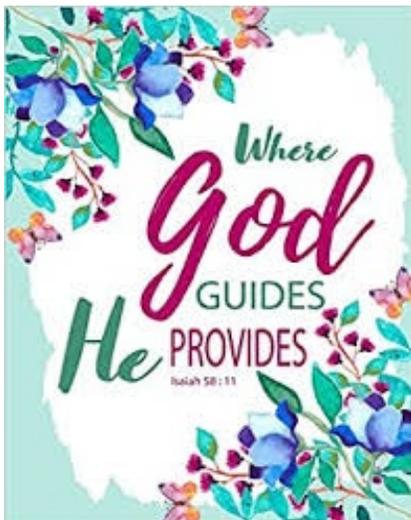
Annual Conference was a virtual event in June. Normal business was done including adopting the budget and setting clergy appointments for 2020-2021. The conclusion of the day was a timeline of Bishop Hope's life journey in ministry. She has aged gracefully and has been full of grace in leading congregations and the NC Conference. She is well liked and respected in the Council of Bishops.

We have been richly blessed by her faith and leadership. We wish her God speed as the next phase of her journey begins with her husband Mike. God will continue to use her in the work to bring the Kingdom more fully visible on earth.

*Carolyn Hankins*, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference

“The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.”

– Isaiah 58:11



## Preschool News

WMP Open House for the 2021-2022 School Year will be held on Tuesday, August 31, 2021. A general meeting for parents will be held in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm. Classrooms will be open to visit and we will have “Popsicles on the Playground!” School will officially begin on Tuesday, September 7th! The Preschool would also like to thank you for the contributions made towards our upcoming school year.



### Birthdays



#### AUGUST

2<sup>nd</sup> Thomas McLam  
5<sup>th</sup> Greyanna Ashley  
Kinsley Lewis  
6<sup>th</sup> Phil Stoll  
15<sup>th</sup> Chalmers Waddell  
17<sup>th</sup> Ben Sauls  
18<sup>th</sup> Nicolas Bell  
19<sup>th</sup> John Duncan  
20<sup>th</sup> Brad Crowell  
25<sup>th</sup> Layton Dowless  
28<sup>th</sup> Marty Sellers  
30<sup>th</sup> Rob Conway  
31<sup>st</sup> Margie Rabon  
Olivia Jane Dowdy  
Quintin Hunt

#### SEPTEMBER

1<sup>st</sup> Lindbergh Holden  
Sylvia Walters  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sue Griffin Lennon  
8<sup>th</sup> Sara Brooks  
Debbie Conway  
10<sup>th</sup> Heather LaMora  
16<sup>th</sup> Mitchell Williamson  
Alma Deans  
17<sup>th</sup> Shepherd Edwards  
18<sup>th</sup> Dan Biser  
19<sup>th</sup> Jim Rabon  
24<sup>th</sup> Suzanne Hall  
27<sup>th</sup> Chuck Wheeler