

The Methodist Messenger

APRIL 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.

Mission Statement of Whiteville United Methodist Church

As people of the body of Christ, we will gather for and be strengthened by Word and Sacraments, participate in loving fellowship, grow in discipleship, and serve our community and the world in Christ's name.



Finding the Peace of God

Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice . . . do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:4-7

What does it mean to have “peace”? Maybe we have peace when we are healthy. That makes sense. When we are healthy, our bodies feel peaceful. Maybe we feel like we have peace when everything is going well at work, or even when we have work. Being out of work, or not having steady work, is stressful. Life definitely feels peaceful when work is going well. What about right now while many of us suddenly find ourselves mostly staying at home? Would you describe this as a “peaceful” time? People are very worried about getting sick. Although many have gotten or are getting vaccinated, some are still terrified of passing this illness to someone unintentionally. Would you say that is “peaceful”? Probably not.

In the passage above Paul said, “Rejoice in the Lord always . . . Do not be anxious about anything . . . And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Funny thing about the circumstances under which Paul wrote this. When he wrote this, I don’t think we would say Paul’s life was exactly “peaceful.” Paul was sitting in a prison in Rome. On top of this, Paul’s health was not great, but that was alright. Paul’s health did not bring him peace, Christ did. Paul’s work was not always going well. Paul was constantly dealing with false teachers who threatened to take grace out of the church, but that was alright. Paul’s work did not necessarily bring him peace, Christ did. This is why Paul was so bold as to say, “Rejoice always.” It didn’t matter in what circumstance Paul found himself. Whether well fed, hungry or poor, Paul still had peace, because his peace was one that did not come from this world, his peace came from Christ. The peace Paul had was not dependent upon his good health or his poor health, his peace came from Christ. The peace Paul had was not dependent upon his work going well or poorly, his peace came from Christ.

As we finish up the seasons of Lent and Easter, we see the peace Paul is talking about. As Christians, our peace almost has nothing to do with what is ongoing on in the world around us. Our peace is a lasting, eternal peace because the Son of God offered a perfect sacrifice for us on Good Friday, suffered for us, died for us, and rose from the dead for us three days later. Because of what Christ has done, He has mended our broken relationship with God the Father that was fractured all the way back in the Fall. We now have peace with God given to us by Jesus. This is why, like Paul, we may rejoice always. Our peace in Christ does not depend upon what is going on in this world. In fact, I would say our peace in Christ can be even more precious to us especially when this world around us seems to be crumbling. You have a peace in Christ that nothing in this world can ever snatch away from you; so important for us to remember, especially now.

~ Pastor Terry

Reaching People, to Teach People, to Reach People!

OUTREACH TEAM NEWS

When the team met on March 8, we set goals for our focus during 2021. These included working more closely with Families First in the conversion of the former Help Mission building into offices for their staff. Part of conserving financial resources, having their own building will eliminate rental costs. Funds from the Pridgen Endowment fund will be used to provide the container from Waste Management needed for materials as we empty the building. You will hear more about how you might help in the days ahead.

As a church, we will change the purposes and people for our missionary salary support (budget includes \$3,600 annually.) For the last several years we have been supporting Mozart Adevu in Ghana and his program for Sustainable Agriculture. His term for service with UMCOR will not be renewed at the end of June. The program has changed many communities and family lives and local people have been trained to lead it in the future.



Rather than sending salary support for an individual missionary, we decided to join the effort of Mission of Hope in Sierra Leone. Centered in the city of Rotifunk, population about 6 million people, the work is with the local hospital and improvements that will save and change the lives of mothers and children. Now a project supported by the NCConference UMC, it was initiated in 2013 by the Wrightsville Beach congregation. The Board of Directors is still located in Wilmington. This will enable us to have more personal interaction and learn about the work of transformation being done. Amy Sessions continues as a member of the Board of Directors and would be available to visit Whiteville.

The church has been supporting Vickie Sigmon, a Church and Community Worker in Winston-Salem. Her program with immigrants is an asset to those people. But the distance is a hindrance to visiting and participating more closely in her work.

Therefore we will now support **Shirley Townsend-Jones** and her work at the Bennettsville-Cheraw Area Cooperative Ministry in South Carolina (near Maxton, NC.) She has been serving these African-American churches since 1991. We will seek to have her visit Whiteville and tell us more about her work and we should be able to attend events in the Cooperative Ministry.



Shirley says about her work: "My work continuously involves reaching out to the poor, the abused, the abandoned, the sick and the aged, the poorly housed and the

malnourished. God's mission is being carried out through the programs and other services we provide through the cooperative ministry. During the summer our Vacation Bible School reaches out to over 500 children and youth."

Pastor Terry will welcome Mission Moments during the worship service on a monthly basis. You can hear about Outreach being done in our local church, such as an update on the Food Pantry, in Columbus County and globally. We will begin on the third Sunday in April.

Carolyn Hankins, Outreach Team leader

Welcoming the Stranger

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

April program - April 5 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

We read and hear a great deal about immigrants coming to the United States seeking a better life for themselves and their family. Depending on the source of the information, the emphasis can be very negative or very positive.

The program will be "Armando's Story" as Armando Peniche shares about his life and an experience with police when he was a young child. He talks about 'his beautiful brown skin' as the cause of this encounter. A presentation by Motus Theater *Welcoming the Stranger* series on undocumented immigrants, the story will be read by Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and Rev. Mike Frese.

Regardless of our viewpoint, hearing someone's story opens a window into a life we have not experienced personally. It raises questions about a variety of responses. Anyone interested in listening to this program can contact Carolyn Hankins, either for a link to the Zoom meeting or a link to the recording of the program.

Cell 910-207-2241; email carolynjhankins@msn.com

SERVING IN APRIL

Acolytes

4th - Emily McLam
11th - Anna & Sophie Bivins
18th - Andrew Bullard
25th - Peyton Hunt

Soundboard

4th - Lynne Inman
11th - Suzanne Hall
18th - Terry Simmons
25th - Robert Page

FINANCE REPORT

As the pandemic slowly improves, our finances are also slowly improving. We are \$10,978 behind budget as of March 14. That is \$3,000 better than just 2 weeks ago. Offerings are only \$1,184 less than this time last year when the shutdown began. We have not paid any apportionments yet, but expect to make a payment in early April. Fixed costs of payroll and utilities make up around 64% of our expenses. Hopefully offerings will continue to improve with the spring season and more people receiving the vaccine. Giving to non-budgeted items are surprisingly strong at \$4,965.

Attendance has averaged 47 in person and 33 online for a total of 80. Last year we averaged 87, before the pandemic. Not included in these numbers is the 130+ attendance when the preschool kids sang March 21.

We just missed the minimum criteria for a 2021 Covid relief payroll loan. A 25% reduction in income in any 2020 calendar quarter was required. We came close at 24% in the 4th quarter. Pastor Terry has made me aware of a possible grant from the NCUMC conference. I am researching the qualifications.

Olive Shuping, along with a few recruits, has graciously agreed to conduct the 2020 financial audit.

Tom Leggett, Finance Chair

NEW BIBLE STUDY

Beginning on April 7 at 6:00 p.m. during Holy Communion/Bible Study on Wednesdays, Pastor Terry will lead a new Bible Study entitled, "United Methodist Beliefs: Our Identity." This Bible Study is hosted by Gregory Ingram featuring contributions by 9 of the world's leading Methodist scholars who offer valuable information and insight concerning core Wesleyan ideas. It builds on the history of Methodism by examining Methodist beliefs and focusing especially on those doctrines that make Methodists distinctive.

Eight half-hour long video presentations by leading Methodist theologians offer valuable information and insight concerning core Wesleyan ideas which will be followed by conversation and insights. This study will benefit both lifelong Methodists and those coming to Methodism from other traditions.

Lessons include:

1. The Nature of Methodist Doctrine – Sharon Grant and Ted Campbell
2. Divine Trinity and Christology – Scott J. Jones
3. Prevenient Grace and Repentance – Elaine Robinson
4. Justifying Faith and Assurance – Walter Klaiber
5. Sanctification – Sondra Wheeler
6. Baptism and Christian Initiation – Henry Knight
7. Eucharist – Lawrence Hull Stookey
8. Eschatology – Randy L. Maddox

PARISH NURSING

Dear Friends,

April is ***Child Abuse Prevention Month*** in North Carolina and across the nation. We would probably all agree that churches and faith communities have unique opportunities to raise awareness regarding the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Additionally, we recognize that we can play a role in the process of strengthening family relationships that help children thrive.

After dealing with the unexpected COVID 19 pandemic for more than a year, we have become keenly aware of added stresses and subsequent mental health issues that continue to impact the lives of all ages, but certainly children, youth and families are often among the most vulnerable. Let us be mindful and listen for God's guidance as we search for ways to reach out to one another in support that is both preventive and curative to overall health and well-being, especially in the issue of Child Abuse Prevention.

Special educational programs can be arranged on topics regarding recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, tools to decrease stress in our lives, strengthening parenting and grand-parenting skills, building better family relationships, physical fitness (exercise class), mindfulness and meditation, storytelling, poetry, music, etc.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted 988 as a new three-digit number to be used nationwide to reach the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline, starting July 16, 2022. Customers must continue to dial 1-800-273-TALK to reach the Lifeline until July 16, 2021.

Hopefully, 50 Plus Exercise Class will resume with twice weekly scheduled time frame in September, 2021.

*“The human mind plans the way,
but the Lord directs the steps.”*

– Proverbs 16:9 (NRSV)

Joy and peace,
Patricia Ray, Parish Nurse

APRIL 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> 6:00 p.m. Tenebrae Service	2 <i>Good Friday</i>	3
4 <i>Easter Day</i> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	5 6:30 p.m. UMW- Zoom 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts/ Fellowship Hall <i>Easter Monday/ Church Office Closed</i>	6 7:00 p.m. Cub Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	7 9:30 a.m. Bible Study/Parlor 6:00 p.m. Holy Communion/ Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Handbell Practice 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice/ Fellowship Hall	8	9	10
11 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	12 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	13 7:00 p.m. Cub Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	14 9:30 a.m. Bible Study/Parlor 6:00 p.m. Holy Communion/ Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Handbell Practice 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice/ Fellowship Hall	15 6:00 p.m. SPRC/ Fellowship Hall	16	17
18 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	19 6:00 p.m. Trustee Mtg/ Parlor 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	20 7:00 p.m. Cub Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	21 9:30 a.m. Bible Study/Parlor 6:00 p.m. Holy Communion/ Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Handbell Practice 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice/ Fellowship Hall	22	23	24 8:30 a.m UMW District Leadership Team Mtg/ Fellowship Hall
25 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Worship	26 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	27 7:00 p.m. Cub Scouts/ Fellowship Hall	28 9:30 a.m. Bible Study/Parlor 6:00 p.m. Holy Communion/ Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Handbell Practice 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice/ Fellowship Hall	29	30	