

# The Methodist Messenger

## PASTOR'S NOTES

### ~Mother's Day Musings~

I overheard a conversation the other week between a mother and her daughter. They were discussing the young girl's facebook account and how every time the mother would post a comment on her daughter's facebook page the young girl would delete it. Parents take note, apparently it's embarrassing when your mom writes "I love you" on your teenage daughter's page. I told the mom at least she lets you be her friend and the mother said, "She doesn't have a choice. She can't have an account unless I'm on there too. I have to see what going on with her."

There wasn't any such thing as Facebook when I was in middle school, but I get her point. My mom always needed to know where I was going to be and who I was with. It's the same thing today, whether a child is out with friends or on the internet. Moms need to know where their children are and that they're safe. They need to be in their children's business.

As I thought about "Mother's day" coming up, I thought about how just like our parents, God never lets us alone either. Do you ever remember losing your parents when you were little? You wander away from them in the store, and how terrifying that is to a child, when all of a sudden you realize that you are alone, that the people you count on to love you, take care of you and keep you safe are nowhere around. How awesome it is to know that God always loves us, knows where we are and always keeps us safe and how much we need that even as adults. There's a passage in the book of John that's always intrigued me. Jesus has been crucified and while he is hanging there on the cross he looks down and sees his mother and his disciple standing there together.

***Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. (John 19:25-27 NIV)***

It always amazes me that even while Jesus is hanging there on the cross, suffering through the pain and agony of crucifixion, bearing the weight of the world's sin on himself, he still has enough compassion to make sure his mother is cared for when he has left.

My own mom passed away almost 15 years ago, but I have never felt that I was left alone. Since she passed, God has always brought people into my life that have made me feel loved and cared for. I can feel her love and God's love for me through those relationships. God does not leave us alone. He walks with us in this life, rejoicing with us in the good times, comforting us in the hard times. Always with us always keeping us safe, always loving us.

In Jesus' great commission of his church he tells the disciples and us to, "**go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**" (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV) God is always with us in the presence of his Holy Spirit, in his Word, in our worship, and in our prayers. We never have to be alone. God also gives us our parents to watch over us, to know where we are, to keep us safe, and sometimes even to embarrass us in front of our friends, and that's ok too.

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## STAFF

Rev. Howard James,  
Pastor

Morgan Simmons,  
Secretary

Chalmers Waddell,  
Custodian

Gus Cothorn,  
Music Director

Nan Leggett,  
Organist

Geneva Ashley,  
Pianist

~Mother's Day Musings continued.~

Won't you pray with me...

For our mothers, who have given us life and love, that we may show them reverence and love, we pray to the Lord...

For mothers who have lost a child through death, that their faith may give them hope, and their family and friends support and console them, we pray to the Lord...

For women, though without children of their own, who like mothers have nurtured and cared for us, for those that have been mother's to us, we pray to the Lord...

For mothers, who have been unable to be a source of strength, who have not responded to their children and have not sustained their families, we pray to the Lord...

Loving God, as a mother gives life and nourishment to her children, so you watch over your church. Bless these women, that they may be strengthened as Christian mothers. Let the example of their faith and love shine forth. Grant that we, their sons and daughters, may honor them always with a spirit of profound respect. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV*

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 8th—United Women in Faith 6:30 p.m.
- May 11th— Caregiver Support Group 1:00 p.m. (parlor)
- May 15th— Church Council Meeting
- May 16th—Sunshine Group Outing
- May 18th—Skin Screenings
- May 21st—CPR Training
- May 23rd— Reaching Out
- June 2nd—Sunshine Group Outing
- June 7th— Lunch & Learn
- June 8th—Caregiver Support Group 1:00 p.m.
- June 15-18— Annual Conference

### DEVOTION TIME

#### A Faithful Witness

The Apostles' faithful witness to Christ's resurrection and our salvation fills the gospels. God's love for us, and His plan to restore us to Him, is revealed throughout the Old and New Testaments. Throughout his Psalms, King David witnesses to God's love for us. May we join in David's prayer: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you" (Psalm 51:12-13 NIV).

In Rev. Tim Keller's devotional book on the Psalms, "The Songs of Jesus," he explains this passage instructs "we cannot minister to others except out of our own joy. Our words will be hard, harsh, indifferent, or absent unless we are overflowing with the joy of knowing that we are God's precious possessions, bought at great cost" (p. 110).

David further exalts God's love in Psalm 145. "One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.... They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness" (4, 7). Just as King David and the Apostles witnessed faithfully in their times, we each have a powerful witness of Christ moving in and through our lives. As we continue our present-day journey toward Pentecost on May 28, may our hearts overflow with the great joy of salvation that all Christians find in Jesus Christ.

Along with Psalm 100, may we resolve to "shout for joy to the Lord.... Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God" (1-3). Let us spread God's love far and wide as we eagerly share the Good News with others: Christ is Risen; He is risen indeed!

-- Judy, a sister in Christ

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Our next meeting is May 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the parlor. It is our last meeting until September. We will be having our annual Candle Burning Ceremony in which candles are lit either in honor of or in memory of someone. Some members choose to do both. The person recognized does not have to be a member of our church. There is a donation of \$.60 per second, \$18.00 for 30 seconds, \$36.00 for 1 minute. If someone doesn't want to use these amounts, they can make a donation of their choosing. The recognitions will be sent to our district and then are recognized at the state level during the summer at conference.

We will be presenting a special Mission Recognition pin to a member who has given her time and dedication to one of our church's missions.

We will work on some gift bags for some hard-working people in the community.

Debbie Conway, President



## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

A heartfelt thank you is extended to all our volunteers who helped with our Lenten and Easter services including our ushers and acolytes, alter committee, choir members and streaming ministry. Your contributions and services which enhance our worship are greatly appreciated.

The Alter committee goes above and beyond to make sure flowers are ordered for Sunday services and proper pariments are in place for each special occasion and communion is prepared. A huge thanks to Suzanne Hall and Margie Rabon for their many services to our church that are taken for granted; communion feast, pariments on the altar, flowers each Sunday, palms for Palm Sunday, poinsettias at Christmas just to name a few. Also, to Sandy Turner and Margie for placing the flowers on the outside cross at Easter during rain and cold temperatures. The cross turned out beautiful with many pictures taken to preserve the memory.

The music department does an outstanding job of preparing and presenting Gods word in song to the congregation. Nan and her music fingers offer up beautiful accompaniment and special music for Lenten Services and other occasions. Under Gus's guidance he can take a choir of Blue Jays and end up with melodic songbirds.

There are many unrecognized volunteers who offer their services in many ways to our church and although all names are not mentioned, it does not go unnoticed and is very appreciated. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" 1 Corinthians 15:58

Worship Committee, Carol Worrell

## MAY/JUNE BIRTHDAYS

### MAY

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Margie Rabon
- 5<sup>th</sup> Mary Williamson
- 12<sup>th</sup> Leah Pait
- 13<sup>th</sup> Paul Georgis
- 18<sup>th</sup> Pat Ray
- 20<sup>th</sup> Keith Sellars  
Beth Walters
- 26<sup>th</sup> Hugh Daniel
- 28<sup>th</sup> Laura Beth Owens
- 31<sup>st</sup> Margaret Hicks  
Rev. James Howard

### JUNE

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Kelly Pait
- 4<sup>th</sup> Clara Hunsucker
- 5<sup>th</sup> Carlton Williamson
- 9<sup>th</sup> Jerry Hall  
Bob Hankins  
Lynn Sellers
- 10<sup>th</sup> Heather Daniel Engroff  
Amanda Hall Jenkins
- 11<sup>th</sup> Becky High
- 14<sup>th</sup> Kristie Georgis  
Biff Simmons
- 17<sup>th</sup> Kathy Graham
- 20<sup>th</sup> Wendy Hood
- 21<sup>st</sup> Geneva Ashley
- 24<sup>th</sup> Ellen McLam
- 26<sup>th</sup> John Turner  
Beth Bullard
- 27<sup>th</sup> Tom Leggett

## WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study will complete Festivals of the Bible the end of May. After a summer break a new study will begin in September. Remember God urges us to apply His Word (I Corinthians 10:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:4) but too often we stop accumulating Bible knowledge. We need to know and understand God's Word then put into practice what we have learned. So—open your Bibles, read, and respond to what God is teaching!

Love in Christ, Florence



## NURTURE COMMITTEE

We are working on our special gifts that we will be giving to all the ladies and girls in the congregation on Mother's Day, May 14<sup>th</sup>. We also will have something special for the men and boys on Father's Day, June 18<sup>th</sup>. Being a good Christian father, mother, uncle or aunt is one of the most important jobs we have in our lifetime! This is our way of honoring parenting (and grandparenting too!).

We had some money left over from the donations basket at the Lenten lunches after some expenses were paid- \$500 ! We gave some to the Pastor's Dis-

cretionary Fund and some to Amy Sessions- who is going to Africa on a mission trip to the Rotifunk Hospital there.

Everyone that came had a great meal, good fellowship and a part in giving money to some very worthy missions! A triple blessing!

-Debbie Conway



## SUNSHINE GROUP

Sunshine Group is out and about again!

### Pearl Fryar Topiary Gardens

Tuesday, May 16

9 am - 3 pm

Bishopville, SC

Bring lunch money for the return trip home. Lunch at Julia Belle's in Florence

Not sure what to expect? Imagine Dr. Seuss loose in a garden! You can find clips on YouTube. PBS did a special titled "A Man Named Pearl!"

Sign up before May 14 to reserve your spot

### Myrtle Beach Pelicans Baseball Game

Friday, June 2

4:30 - 10:30 pm (return time approximate)

\$35 per person \*\* group rate of 15 people

This includes:

- 1- lower level seats on 1st base side of the field
- 2- all you can eat pregame picnic including chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, beans, slaw, tea, lemonade and water
- 3- post game fireworks

All monies must be paid no later than May 14 to reserve your spot. Check or cash to Tammy McCullum.

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Outreach Committee met Tuesday, March 21, 2023. We reviewed the various projects and programs supported by the committee last year. That list includes, but is not limited to: Families First, Food Pantry, Mission Support for Rotifunk Hospital in Sierra Leone, Partners in Ministry, Donayre Cancer Care Center Food Pantry, Columbus County Literacy Council, Blood Drives, Skin-check Clinics, Flu Shot Clinics and Lunch & Learn. Pat Ray, our Parish Nurse, initiates and oversees these latter events listed. Her report, with upcoming events and dates, will follow my comments in this newsletter. We are so fortunate to have someone of Pat's caliber, experience and big heart to help fulfill these ministries in our church and in the local community.

We discussed the possibility of a field trip to the Partners in Ministry facility in Laurinburg, NC. PIM is a National Mission Institution. They offer after-school programs, summer camps, adult GED classes, adult & senior activities, a food pantry, community gardens and even home repairs for low-income, elderly or disabled veteran homeowners. I have spoken with Dr. Melba McCallum, Executive Director of PIM. She was excited at the possibility of our visit and may even put us to work for a couple of hours during our time there. That "work" could include planting in their gardens, cleaning classrooms, sorting in the food pantry or other tasks to assist the staff in the work and ministry of their organization.

At our next meeting (TBD), we will discuss specific dates and times for the field trip. It should be an informative and rewarding experience with fellow church members and PIM staff.

Watching God Work!

Kathy G. Simmons

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*The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Psalm 145:8*

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## PRESCHOOL NEWS

As our school year comes to a close we would like to take a moment to thank each individual that contributed to the preschool this year. With the love, support, and prayers of the church we have truly thrived. We cannot wait to watch our preschool continue to grow and prosper. It has been a blessing to watch each child grow not only academically but also in their love and knowledge of Christ.

Our preschool graduation will be held May 26th beginning at 11:00 in the church fellowship hall. We would like to extend an invitation to any church member that would care to join us.

Blessings to all, Preschool Staff



# May 2023

Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

	1	2	3	4 <i>National Day of Prayer</i>	5	6
7	8 <i>United Women in Faith 6:30 p.m.</i>	9	10	11 <i>Caregivers Support Group 1:00 p.m.</i>	12	13
14 <i>Baptism Service</i>	15 <i>Church Council Meeting 6:00 p.m.</i>	16 <i>Sunshine Group-Pearl Fryer Topiary Gardens</i>	17	18 <i>Skin Screenings 5:30-7:30</i>	19	20
21	22	23 <i>Reaching Out 6:00 @Dale's Seafood</i>	24	25	26 <i>WUMC Preschool Graduation Service</i>	27
28	29 <i>Memorial Day</i>	30	31			

# June 2023

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2 <i>Sunshine Group Pelicans Baseball</i>	3
4	5	6	7 <i>Lunch &amp; Learn 11:00 a.m.</i>	8 <i>Caregiver's Support</i>	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 <i>Reaching Out 6:00 @Dale's Seafood</i>	28	29	30	



# WHITEVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

902 PINCKNEY ST.  
WHITEVILLE, NC 28472



Rev. Howard James, Pastor  
Tuesday-Friday/ 8:30 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.

Mrs. Morgan Simmons, Administrative Assistant  
Monday-Thursday/8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.  
12 noon-12:30 p.m. Lunch

Mr. Chalmers Waddell, Custodian  
Monday-Friday/ 7:30-12:30 a.m.

Ms. Tammie Anderson, Treasurer  
Friday/4:00-6:00 p.m. (or later)

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