



The Methodist Messenger

JULY 2020

Whiteville United Methodist Church

Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Communion Service - 6:00 p.m.



Hello Beautiful People of Whiteville UMC:

I am looking forward with great joy and deep humility to being your pastor. As I begin, I want to tell you a little about myself so we don't have to feel like strangers the first time we meet. I grew up in the small town of Rowland, NC, and the beginnings of my call to ministry came in a rural Baptist Church that I attended as a teenager. I accepted the call to ministry in 1993 and began my pastoral ministry in 1994. Having served churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Kentucky, my goal has been to build up the Body of Christ by helping local congregations become healthy and effective places.

Gloria and I met in the summer of 1973, lived in the same community and went through high school together. We were married on May 19, 1984, and parented three daughters: Kelsey, Lindsey, and Illya. We have six grandchildren, Peyton, Camden, Laiken, Zoey, Luke, and Lyla due in July.

When I was in seminary, I read these words of Irenaeus of Lyon, a bishop and theologian who lived in the second century: "The glory of God is a human being fully alive." These words have stayed with me as a vision for what all of us can come to be by the grace of God.

As I begin my time as your pastor—as we begin this new journey together—my prayer is that it will be a time in which we all come fully alive, to the glory of God. You have many stories to share with me about what this "coming alive" has been like in your life—your individual and family stories and the saga of your community and the ministry of Whiteville United Methodist Church. I have stories to share with you about what this has looked like in my life: from my first experiences of God to my journey as a pastor and a catalyst for change and renewal in the church.

For all of us, becoming fully alive is an inward journey and an outward one. And of course, we have our ancient and common story—our family story of the Bible—that is itself the story of an inward and outward journey that still breathes and inspires today. Together we will listen. God is calling us to change lives, to reach out and touch lives with the good news of God's love and grace. And I can't think of a better way to do this than to be with one another along the way. It is my prayer that our faith journey will lead us closer in our relationship with Christ, so that we might know the love of Christ, that surpasses all of our understanding, and be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:19). Together we will dream. Together we will work for a faith that is life-giving and beautiful and for a world in which every human being is fully alive to the glory of God.

Gloria and I are so excited to be among you and to begin meeting you. We look forward to our first Sunday with you and to many "firsts" with you in the weeks and years ahead.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Terry