



The Methodist Messenger

APRIL 2017

Whiteville United Methodist Church

Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Communion Service - 6:30 p.m.



PARTICIPATING IN
THE CENTRAL EVENTS OF
THE STORY OF THE WORLD
Holy Week 2017

Palm Sunday, April 9

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Service of Worship in the Sanctuary

Wednesday of Holy Week, April 12

12:00 noon Community Lenten Service of Worship in the Sanctuary
and Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall

6:30 p.m. Service of Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday of Holy Week, April 13

6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service of Worship in the Sanctuary

Good Friday, April 14

6:30 p.m. Good Friday Service of Worship in the Sanctuary and Neighborhood

Easter Day, April 16

6:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service at St. Mark AME Zion Church

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Easter Service of Worship in the Sanctuary

THE OLD RUGGED CROSS

You, as members and friends of the Whiteville United Methodist Church, have probably noticed a recent change in the narthex, or entry way, of the sanctuary. The bulletin board, that was seldom tended to, has been changed. No, it has been totally transformed! A beautiful picture of the Cross of our Lord now covers that bulletin board. From a dark hill rises the Cross; it is located exactly where two walls meet. A glorious sunrise makes the Cross stand out with stark boldness. And the best known words from the Bible -- "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16, NASB) -- surround the Cross. This painting shows the beauty, and proclaims the power, of the old rugged Cross.

Think about it. We enter the narthex, and there is the Cross so colorfully depicted on the walls of the narthex. Then we enter the sanctuary, where the Cross on the altar stands at the center of this holy space. Truly, Christ crucified and risen stands at the center of our church's life together, as Christ crucified and risen is at the center of our living as His disciples.

Whiteville Church and her pastor thank Mrs. Debbie Conway, our Congregational Artist in Residence [!], for this magnificent gift. Debbie, we are grateful for you and for this marvelous gift to the church!

Again, Debbie, thank you.

In Christ,
Pastor Paul

TRUTH SEEKING, DEMOCRACY, AND FREEDOM OF
THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION -- A STATEMENT BY
ROBERT P. GEORGE AND CORNEL WEST

Today, freedom of speech in American society seems threatened, particularly on college and university campuses. Speech-denying disruption and violence at the University of California at Berkeley and Middlebury College are the most recent examples. In response to this apparently increasing phenomenon, Dr. Robert P. George, the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University, and Dr. Cornel West, Professor of the Practice of Public Philosophy in the Divinity School and the Department of African and African-American Studies at Harvard University, have written the following statement. In this statement, these two Christians -- Dr. George, an articulate spokesman for conservative concerns, and Dr. West, a strong activist for progressive proposals -- demonstrate that Americans (especially American Christians) can indeed be united on areas of common cause in public life. (In other words, in American public life, all is not divided.) This statement, if heeded, would go a long ways in advancing civility in American life -- which the entire Church always supports. (PTS)

March 14, 2017

The pursuit of knowledge and the maintenance of a free and democratic society require the cultivation and practice of the virtues of intellectual humility, openness of mind, and, above all, love of truth. These virtues will manifest themselves and be strengthened by one's willingness to listen attentively and respectfully to intelligent people who challenge one's beliefs and who represent causes one disagrees with and points of view one does not share.

That's why all of us should seek respectfully to engage with people who challenge our views. And we should oppose efforts to silence those with whom we disagree—especially on college and university campuses. As John Stuart Mill taught, a recognition of the possibility that we may be in error is a good reason to listen to and honestly consider—and not merely to tolerate grudgingly—points of view that we do not share, and even perspectives that we find shocking or scandalous. What's more, as Mill noted, even if one happens to be right about this or that disputed matter, seriously and respectfully engaging people who disagree will deepen one's understanding of the truth and sharpen one's ability to defend it.

None of us is infallible. Whether you are a person of the left, the right, or the center, there are reasonable people of goodwill who do not share your fundamental convictions. This does not mean that all opinions are equally valid or that all speakers are equally worth listening to. It certainly does not mean that there is no truth to be discovered. Nor does it mean that you are necessarily wrong. But they are not necessarily wrong either. So someone who has not fallen into the idolatry of worshiping his or her own opinions and

loving them above truth itself will want to listen to people who see things differently in order to learn what considerations—evidence, reasons, arguments—led them to a place different from where one happens, at least for now, to find oneself.

All of us should be willing—even eager—to engage with anyone who is prepared to do business in the currency of truth-seeking discourse by offering reasons, marshaling evidence, and making arguments. The more important the subject under discussion, the more willing we should be to listen and engage—especially if the person with whom we are in conversation will challenge our deeply held—even our most cherished and identity-forming—beliefs.

It is all-too-common these days for people to try to immunize from criticism opinions that happen to be dominant in their particular communities. Sometimes this is done by questioning the motives and thus stigmatizing those who dissent from prevailing opinions; or by disrupting their presentations; or by demanding that they be excluded from campus or, if they have already been invited, disinvited. Sometimes students and faculty members turn their backs on speakers whose opinions they don't like or simply walk out and refuse to listen to those whose convictions offend their values. Of course, the right to peacefully protest, including on campuses, is sacrosanct. But before exercising that right, each of us should ask: Might it not be better to listen respectfully and try to learn from a speaker with whom I disagree? Might it better serve the cause of truth-seeking to engage the speaker in frank civil discussion?

Our willingness to listen to and respectfully engage those with whom we disagree (especially about matters of profound importance) contributes vitally to the maintenance of a milieu in which people feel free to speak their minds, consider unpopular positions, and explore lines of argument that may undercut established ways of thinking. Such an ethos protects us against dogmatism and groupthink, both of which are toxic to the health of academic communities and to the functioning of democracies.

NURTURE COMMITTEE

The first two Lenten lunches have gone very well. The food has been delicious and they have been well-attended! Many thanks to Margie Rabon and company and Suzanne Hall and crew for using their time and talents to make the first and second lunches so successful.

As we approach Easter, let us be mindful of what a wonderful gift God has given us all: the opportunity for forgiveness of our sins and eternal life through the sacrifice of His Son.

– Debbie Conway,
Chair

COMMUNITY SERVICES OF WORSHIP
ON THE WEDNESDAYS OF LENT 2017

Whiteville United Methodist Church
Worship at 12:00 Noon
Lunch at 12:30 p.m.

March 8/Wednesday of Lent I
Rev. Justin DuBose, Pastor
Missionary Alliance Church
Whiteville, NC

March 15/Wednesday of Lent II
Dr. Darrin K. Moore, Pastor
New Hope Baptist Church
Whiteville, NC

March 22/Wednesday of Lent III
Rev. Andy Anderson, Pastor
Overflow Fellowship Church
Little River, SC

March 29/Wednesday of Lent IV
Rev. Jeremy Simmons, Chaplain
Columbus Regional Healthcare System
Whiteville, NC

April 5/Wednesday of Lent V
Rev. Charlrean B. Mapson, Pastor
St. Mark AME Zion Church
Whiteville, NC

April 12/Wednesday of
Palm Sunday/Holy Week
Rev. Bob Hankins (ret.)
Whiteville United Methodist Church
Whiteville, NC

LENTEN GRATITUDE

It seems that everywhere I look lately – in studying the Word, in my spiritual reading, in the natural world, in the Eucharist – God is reminding me that gratitude, thanksgiving, is, must be, at the heart of all. The Eucharist, or Holy Communion, of course was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper. There Jesus took bread and gave thanks; he took the cup and gave thanks. In the Greek, what is translated as “he gave thanks” is *eucharisteo*. The root word of *eucharisteo* is *charis*, meaning “grace,” “favor,” “gratitude;” this word also holds its derivative *chara*, meaning “joy.” Can it be that in giving thanks we receive joy? As I practice gratitude for all the wondrous gifts of God’s grace in my life—a blessed time away with my family, azaleas in the falling snow, my eighty-four-year-young mother laughing with delight as I teased her about her

busy social schedule, a flock of robins pecking away in my front yard, prayers answered for a friend’s healing—the list is endless—joy wells up and overflows—no effort required. But Jesus, “for the joy set before him,” embraced the darkness and cruelty of his death on the cross. Facing the abandonment of God, he offers thanks for that which will grievously wound his body and threaten to crush his spirit **and yet** yield the unspeakable joy of salvation for the world. We are told to “give thanks in **all** things.” When gratitude becomes a way of living, then we too can choose the joy in **all** things—even in the pain and sorrow of our deepest losses.

– Wanda Diefes,
Co-Lay Leader

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Whiteville United Methodist Women will have their April meeting on Monday, April 3, in the Parlor at 6:30 p.m. All women are encouraged to join this group of women for an evening of fellowship and spiritual growth. Vickie Pait has assumed a lot of responsibility for this night. Not only is she doing the devotion and being hostess, but she is in charge of the program. Our program is on recycling, and Vickie has invited a person involved with a recycling company to be our guest speaker.

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 29, at 9:00 a.m. At this time we will have a Fellowship Breakfast at “Sue’s Diner” located in Memory’s Plaza. This is a special meeting so all of you ladies who do not like to get out at night will have an opportunity to attend. This will take the place of our May 1st meeting.

Another very important date to mark on your calendar is Saturday, May 6th. On this day Harbor District United Methodist Women will join together at Wesley Memorial UMC for a “Spiritual Enrichment Day.” Please plan to arrive at the church so we can leave no later than 8:30 a.m. Please make sure to get your name on the president’s list if you plan to attend this event.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

Our Methodist Men’s meeting for April will be held on Thursday, April 6th, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Mr. Milton Parker will have our program – on a mission trip with Power Point presentation. Our food will be delicious soup and sandwiches prepared by our own Chalmers Waddell. Please make plans now to attend and enjoy our program, food, and fellowship, and invite a friend to attend with you.

Brad Crowell, President

UNITED METHODIST YOUTH

The youth are currently preparing for our Spring yard sale being held Saturday, April 8, in the Fellowship Hall from 7:00 -11:00 a.m. We welcome any donations you have and ask that you bring them to Fellowship Hall or call Heather, 770-1157, for a pick up of larger items. Thank you for your support and prayers for the youth ministry.

– Heather LaMora,
Director



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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.

The Whiteville United Methodist Church Service of Worship is broadcast on WTXY 1540 AM from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Also it is available online at www.wtxy1540.com: **click on "Church Services" in the upper heading, and then click on "Click to Listen Live" next to "United Methodist Church of Whiteville"** at 10:00 a.m. to hear the complete audio of the service.

Mrs. Kathy Graham, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Layton Dowless, Custodian

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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Rev. Paul T. Stallworth, Pastor