



ZION HAPPENINGS

ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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August 2020



OUR VISION

**To be a church
that follows
Jesus so
closely and
makes
disciples so
well, that our
community and
town cannot
help but be
transformed.**

The Pastor Note

Normally when someone says, "God has blessed me," we usually relate that phrase to success, good health, wealth, a good job, and many other 'good' things that happen to people. We say that with good intentions, with good faith because it is a natural way to acknowledge that hand of God has been in their favor. We all want to be under God's blessing.

The most common understanding of what it means to be blessed by God is that we receive good things from Him. In this sense, we can say that God's blessings are for everyone, both believers and non-believers. Matthew 5:45 says that the Father who is in heaven makes His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rains on the just and the unjust.

During this time of pandemic, we know that things have gone bad, but at the same time, the situation reminds us that we are not in control but God is. And yet, even during difficult times God protects and sends blessing to all people. We all have experienced the goodness of God. As an example, God in his love allows us to worship in an outdoor setting, to enjoy the nature, farmers work their fields, we can buy food even when things are restricted, many people go to enjoy vacations even when traveling is restricted, and many more things. Yes, things can get worst, but the word of God says that "God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." Phil 4:19. So, we as children of God can own that phrase "God has blessed me".

There is a beautiful story of care and provision found in the books of 1 Kings 17 in which the prophet Elijah was protected and fed by God due to judgment sent to the Northern Kingdom because of the worship to the god Baal.

The story begins with the prophet Elijah from Gilead, was telling King Ahab of Israel that there will be a drought because they eliminated the worship of Yahweh. Then God instructed Elijah to leave town and stay in a ravine that lies east of Jordan. God told him that he had instructed ravens to go and feed Elijah with meat and bread twice a day, and that he will drink from the brook there. But when the brook dried out, then God told Elijah that new provisions (blessings) were prepared for him and asked him to move from the ravine and to go to a widow who lived in Sidon. As Elijah went to Sidon, he found the woman collecting sticks and he asked her for some water, and the story says that she obeyed Elijah and gave him water and even she prepared bread for him as well.

This story of the blessings God was pouring out upon Elijah in difficult times become more outstanding when we meditate in the resources God used to bless him. For instance, in order for Elijah to survive from dying of hunger while hiding from King Ahab, God sent him ravens to feed him, that by itself was an exceptional sign of God's power and authority over his creation, but the particularity of this is that, according to the Jewish laws, the ravens were considered unclean, and yet, God used them to feed Elijah. Secondly, God used a widow to feed the prophet. Widows were one of the lower classes in society. They normally were poor and if they didn't have family or remarried, they will survive basically by the charity of the people, and again, God used one of them to help the prophet to survive. The happy end of this story is that as she obeyed God and helped Elijah, and they all were blessed by God as he multiplied the few resources of food available in that difficult time, until rain came upon the land again.

We as children of God, living in difficult times, are invited to rest in God's presence, to acknowledge that even in challenging times God bless us, and sometimes God would use resources that may seem unfit for our needs, but as we see, God uses the weak of the world to bless His people. Yes, we can praise God and say: "God has blessed me", and with that we open our hearts to understand that God never leave us or forsake us, and God will continue blessing you and protecting you always. Amen!

Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap; they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Luke 12:24

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Norma



NEWS....

The Book Bag Mission

Thirty one happy children from Fairview, New Salem, Unionville, and Piedmont Middle Schools received a backpack full of school supplies and a new pair of shoes at our drive-thru Book Bag Mission on August 8th. Thank you to everyone that gave their time and donations for this mission. *A special thank you to Tanja Huntley who planned and coordinated this successful event!* She spent many hours, contacting schools, buying and organizing supplies, and packing book bags. We appreciate her willing spirit!



Loaves and Fishes

We collected 60 food items for Loaves and Fishes in July. When Emily went to deliver the items, the food shelves were very low. *We will continue to collect boxed and canned food, toiletry items, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies for Loaves and Fishes through August.* Food insecurity is still a problem for many of our neighbors. If you can help, please drop your donations by the church for this ministry. *In September, the Loaves and Fishes item will be a box of crackers.*

Journey Bags for Foster Children

The Journey bags mission items for foster children were received with much thankfulness. The Forgotten Initiative that works with the Union County Department of Social Services sadly has reported that they have more children in care than ever before, so our donations will be put to good use!

July 2020 Collections

Online Collections (Tithes)	1,400
7/05 Tithes	700
7/05 Book Bag Mission	150
7/05 Community Shelter	300
7/05 Sunday School Books	18
7/12 Tithes	2,115
7/12 Book Bag Mission	75
7/12 Food Pantry	20
7/12 Sunday School Books	21
7/17 Tithes	3,742
7/17 Book Bag Mission	225
7/17 UMCOR	50
7/17 Community Shelter	100
7/17 Memorials	290
7/17 Sunday School Books	26
7/19 Tithes	1,195
7/26 Tithes	5,160
7/26 Sunday School Books	10
7/31 Tithes	300
7/31 Book Bag Mission	250
Total	\$16,147

The UMW Blood Drive will be postponed until the church building is opened all the way up. We will continue to keep you Updated. Thank you for your patience!



If you would like anything added to next months newsletter please email it to zionumcmonroe@gmail.com by the first of the month
Thank you all

Please join us on Sunday mornings at 8:30 for our outdoor worship service! If you haven't been to one of our outdoor services, you have missed a blessing. So enjoy a drive out, you can sit in your car, bring a lawn chair or stand, we are practicing social distancing.



AUGUST

- Charles & Kay Medlin-1
- Doug & Nancy Martin-2
- Jamie & Amy Wiley-4
- Carlton & Gail Brock-11
- Mark & Jennifer Clark-16
- Bobby & Ann Simpson-26
- Bobby & Lila Clontz-30



AUGUST

- Spencer Thomas-1
- Tracy Biggers-2
- Daniel Purser-3
- Jennifer Clark-8
- Kevin Brock-9
- Robbie Hall-12
- Julie Plyler-20
- Madeline Taylor-25
- Katie Price-26
- Emily McCall -
- Annette Harris-31

SEPTEMBER

- Arlene Haiger - 1
- Erin Beach - 9
- Ronald Thomas - 11
- Teresa Phifer - 14
- Susan Clontz - 17
- Jamie Wiley - 21
- Betsy Hinson - 22
- Tony Purser - 25
- Natalie Harris - 26
- Mark Clark - 27
- Vann Huntley - 27

Music Notes from Barbara!

These are truly difficult times during the pandemic. It has given all of us time to reflect on what we can do to make our lives more open to receive and put into action what God has been trying to tell us to do with the talents He has given us!

Every day that we are given is so precious! Let's use our time wisely to do something to help each other; maybe just pick up the phone and call someone to cheer them up. Send a card to let someone know that we are thinking about them and we care.

I hope more of you will make an effort to come out to our Sunday morning service at 8:30 a.m.

I guarantee that you will receive a blessing!

Looking forward to seeing you this Sunday!

There's a song in my heart today and we have the "Blessed Assurance" that Jesus is mine and He is taking care of us 24 - 7, and always!

Love you all!!!

Barbara!



- Andrew Mullins
- Kim Mullins
- Chip and Leigh Harris
- Elizabeth Brock (Polkton UMC)
- Mitzi McManus
- Joe and Helem Greene
- Kay Medlin
- Jim Beam
- Doug and Nancy Martin
- C.W. Price
- James and Shirley Lowery
- Elaine Strobel
- Carol Johnson
- Jimmy and Susan Clontz



Virtual Sunday School:

"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever." Amen. Philippians 4:19-20

Adult Sunday School:

The Gift class invites everyone to join them on a Zoom Conference every Sunday morning from 10:00-10:45 AM. Come and join us for a morning that is meaningful and fruitful with our Bible Study. For information please contact Skip Watwood. We miss you all.

**Virtual Youth Ministry
Middle High Group :**

Our Youth Group Zoom Hangout meets every Sunday from 6:00 PM- 6:40 PM. We do hope that this virtual space helps our youth feel more connected with the church family and their faith as they continue exploring the Book of John. This group is hosted by Pastor Norma, Annette Harris, and Amy Cline. For more information please contact Norma @ zionpastornv@gmail.com

High School Group:

The High School Zoom small group will meet every Sunday from 7:00 PM - 7:40 PM. This group is hosted by Sidney Haigler, Phil Douglas, Annette Harris, and Pastor Norma.

This group will meet on zoom and the link will come in your email. Join us!



Conference Annual Report

METRO DISTRICT

The Metro District of the Western NC Conference is a glimpse of the Kingdom. The district has 125 churches, approximately 170 clergy, with over 70,000 United Methodists across six counties in the Charlotte Metro region. The district is incredibly diverse-- urban and rural, rich and poor, African-American, Hispanic, White, Brazilian, Hmong, Vietnamese, Liberian, Ghanaian, Nigerian, South African, and more. Churches across the district are committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ, finding new ways of connecting with neighbors, and seeking the physical, spiritual, mental, educational, and economic thriving of all of the neighbors by loving them as Christ has loved us.

Twelve lay persons have participated in Cohort 4 of the Spiritual Academy for Leading Transformation (SALT). A total of twenty five laity participated in this eight-month (seven session) leadership opportunity. More than 300 laity were equipped for ministry as they participated in Metro LEADs where the focus was on leadership, evangelism, and discipleship. Over 130 laity are participating in Lay Servant Training classes are offered in both English and Spanish. The district has approved its second Certified Lay Minister and celebrated the ministry of several hundred laity and the myriad ways they are faithfully serving their community and local churches.

Twenty-six churches have participated in the seven-week instructional and practical Racial Healing Social Justice Cohort where they intentionally developed strategic local partnerships to connect, address, and impact local communities around issues of racism and injustice. Participants gained knowledge pertaining to historical systems of oppression and injustice while identifying opportunities for engaging in the Gospel work of reconciliation and peace-making. The cohort also considered ways to respond to justice concerns in their local communities in collaboration with neighboring churches and government leaders in order to create beloved communities.

The Metro District Multi-Cultural Multi-Ethnic Cohort is presently in its fourth season. Through the cohort churches that do not presently reflect their neighborhood and have a desire to re-imagine how their church can engage with the community are invited to join the movement--"Casting the Nets to the Other Side of the Boat"-- with the hope of visioning and re-envisioning the church of Jesus Christ in their "New Normal." The 2019-2020 Cohort launched with five faith communities participating in this transformational process.

The Metro District also joins with the rest of the WNCC in creating new places for new people. This includes the formation of new faith communities with a commitment to being multi-cultural and multi-ethnic. The district is partnering with Wesley Community Development to plan and implement creative redevelopment plans for church property that will enable the district to connect with neighbors in new and fruitful ways. Opportunities to be good stewards of under-utilized church property are being explored in order to address food insecurity and the need for affordable housing.

Many local churches have formed Fresh Expressions and the Metro Dinner Church Movement sets the table for food, faith, worship and the formation of authentic relationships. The Metro Dinner Church movement has proven to be an effective, affordable, impactful, and contextual approach to starting and re-envisioning expressions of being the church in ways that foster authentic relationships with the neighbors. As one dinner church leader observed, "When we have our community meals, I am discovering that God is stretching me out of my comfort zone and when I move with the Holy Spirit lives really are changed - even mine."

Finally, the COVID emergency has impacted everyone, moving all to consider what it means to be the church and what is essential to the mission of the Gospel. The agility, creativity, and adaptability of the churches have been inspiring. Signs have been seen that the district is becoming more outwardly focused, and more missional, with life centered on smaller gatherings, the means of grace, and a daily (rather than one day per week) approach to being a people journeying the way of Christ. In many ways this challenging season has called the people to be more Methodist--a people who love God and neighbor in ways that sanctify and transform and that is a reason to hope.

David Hockett, District Superintendent



ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 1:00 P.M.

Pastor Norma's participation in ministry in the WNCC UMC for the next quadrennium 2020-2024

WNCC UMC Hispanic/ Latino Committee

WNCC UMC Justice and Reconciliation Team

WNCC UMC Board of Ordain Ministry (BOM)

WNCC UMC Just Compensation Task Force

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020 WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY.