

# Mt. Hope United Church of Christ

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## ***Church Pastor***

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## ***Consistory President***

Gloria Apple

## ***Board of Christian Education***

Susan Finley, Director

## ***Outreach & Digital Technology Director***

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Katelyn Gossett

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# Mt. Hope Messenger May - 2022

## *Coming Home*

Henri Nouwen writes beautifully about home in his book about the Prodigal Child. He writes, "Leaving home is living as though I do not yet have a home, and must look far and wide to find one. Home is the center of my being, where I can hear the voice that says, "You are my beloved. On you my favor rests." The same voice that gave life to the first Adam and spoke to Jesus. The same voice that speaks to all the children of God and sets them free to live in the midst of a dark world while remaining in the light."

I have recently had a host of conversations with folks who are teetering with the idea of being a part of church. Some of them have at some point belonged to a church and some have not. I was particularly struck by a conversation I had last week with Dave (name has been changed to uphold confidentiality.) Dave was talking candidly with a casually assembled group of parents. Dave had mentioned casually that he was a person that enjoyed being able to control the outcome, that he liked to drive and steer and direct and that he liked to be in control. "I drive a tractor, not a horse. Can't control a horse like you can control a tractor." Later in the conversation, I invited Dave to come back to church. His response was one of appreciation for the invite, "I know I should, but I don't have time and by the way, I already have a relationship with my

Maker." I wasn't sure if he was trying to convince himself or me. I didn't need convincing. Dave is a mighty fine person, already.

Later I thought a great deal about why I had invited Dave back to church at that moment I think I know why. I invited him back to church not to save his soul, for he already believes in God. I invited Dave back to church to help him find his home and to save him from himself. To believe that the only good that will come to us is in the good that we can control and steer and drive to predictable outcomes is to trust only ourselves. Trusting God, is coming home. Laying down our strong holds and anxieties and fears and hurts in the presence of the One Maker, who has promised to care for us, provide for us beyond what we can control. Nouwen said this, **"The question is not, how do I find God, but how do I let myself be found by God."** Henri Nouwen's quotation about home makes this month at Mount Hope a really special invitation. One to which **YOU ARE INVITED!** Come home to a place where you can find the center of your being. Come home and hear the words, "You are my beloved, not for what you do or for where you have been or for what you have accomplished. You are beloved because of who you are...God's child! Welcome home, you, Child of God. In this season of Easter, come let yourself be found by God.

Courage and love for your Easter journey,

Pastor Kristin

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Mt Hope United Church of Christ

Consistory Minutes

3-10-22

Approved as of 4/21/22

Members Present: Gloria Apple, Lorie Arrington, Dallas Belvin, Janet Ellis (via Zoom), Cathy Gossett, Cindy Hyle, Joe Hughes, Cole Levens, Sharon Mims, and Dora Moore.

Pastor Present: Kristin Vaughn

Susan Finley joined us to present the Board of Christian Education Report & discuss the playground.

The meeting was called to order by Gloria Apple, a quorum was established and Gloria welcomed all.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Cole Levens had a devotion and time of prayer.

Psalm 77:7-9

7 "Will the Lord reject forever?  
Will he never show his favor again?

8 Has his unfailing love vanished forever?  
Has his promise failed for all time?

9 Has God forgotten to be merciful?  
Has he in anger withheld his compassion?"

Cole's devotion talked about asking for clarity during lent season.

**We Celebrate our past**

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Dora Moore to approve the minutes from February 2022 consistory meeting and Cindy Hyle seconded. Motion carried.

**Treasure's Report:**

The beginning balance was \$221,904.33, Receipts \$24,692.08, and monthly expenses \$14,819.41. Leaves an ending balance of \$231,777.00. Cole Levens made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report and Sharon Mims seconded. Motion carried.

**Pastor's Report**

Deaths were Lance Greeson and Bill Smith this month, and held L.G. Underwood service. Jacob Arrington was baptized. March 13, 20, & 27 will be a new member confirmation class. Twelve people were invited and April 17<sup>th</sup> will be the Sunday new members will join.

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> members class the pastor invites leaders to visit and fill in the class their roles, activities, and meet the class.

Ashe Wednesday, there were approximately 40 in attendance, and felt great to be in the church.

Worship attendance is up and down, encouraging us to reach out and invite others back. Still maintaining approximately 150 views on Facebook. During worship about 28-30 watch live on Facebook, but can't track those that share and are watching.

March 20<sup>th</sup> will be Communion, March 27<sup>th</sup> will be One Great Hour of Sharing. Need 2 sets of people to help with Communion on 20<sup>th</sup>, volunteers are Dora Moore, Cindy Hyle, Lorie Arrington, and Cole Levens.

April 3-10 pastor Kristin will be taking vacation, Ray Mims will fill in for Palm Sunday.

Holy Week coming up, Maundy Thursday service will be at 6:30 and Good Friday service at 7:00 pm.

The Aria family is struggling to find jobs for the two sons. The middle two daughters have found part time jobs.

Playground dedication – April 3 immediately following the service.

February/March we have obtained 2 new interim staff members. Lorie Arrington in the office and Katelyn Gossett starting as Youth Interim. Lorie is doing a good job and brings a positive vibe to the office. Katelyn started as soon as completed the safe church program.

Pastoral care needs have slowed down hugely. Thankful many feel better.

### **Committee Reports:**

Committee reports will be sent to Janet Ellis going forward and she will present at consistory meetings.

1-BCE – Susan Finley presented us with details outlining the Parent Town Hall meeting and Pizza Lunch that had already occurred for youth to brainstorm ideas for the future. Bingo Night coming up on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Mission: Be the Church for March/April will be March 26<sup>th</sup> for the Styrofoam collection and clean up of Mt. Hope Baseball Field. April 3 and May 15 remaining for “The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss” days. Easter EGGstravaganza on Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup>. Confirmation is in progress. Music

Camp & VBS to be combined, will meet the week of June 13-16, with concert & family night on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Susan submitted a request to the consistory to create a “Children’s PRAYground” at the back of the sanctuary. This would consist of removing 2 pews on each side. There will be a couple of rocking chairs for infant mothers. A table and chairs for little people so they will feel a part of the service and an activity relating to the service will be held. This will also allow ones unsure of leaving their children opportunity to do so and worship but children in sight. It will also eliminate the issue of having enough to operate the nursery, while meeting Safe Church Guidelines. Gloria advised Susan we would discuss in more detail during new business and get back to her when completed.

2-Maintenance & Trustees – Freddie Gossett had the walkway lights repaired in the front of the church. We are now waiting for new bulbs to arrive. Hardin Phipps has ordered a new flag. They will be checking on the heat/air.

3-Stewardship – meeting coming up

4-Urban Ministry – food is being delivered, 112 pounds this past month per Dave Blakesly

5-Communications Team – Lorie Arrington advised Bill Craft had worked on and was able to open spreadsheets Joan had created for Music Worship. He also ordered what we hope to be a fix for Excel on the computer for Susan and music. Still going to plan a training for our website and social media once things get settled back in from COVID. Also, we are working on investigating a phone tree for the church. Currently, Barbara Greeson is contacting some of the local churches that already have one for information.

6-WISE Team – March 9<sup>th</sup> turned out great, and will continue. The next new sessions will begin on April 15<sup>th</sup> regarding Autism and Child Abuse month. Pinwheels will be placed in the lawn for abused children.

If a committee was not listed, there is no report at this time.

**Prayer – Pastor Kristin**

### **Old Business:**

**Steeple Repair Update – Gloria Apple**

Things were not in contract as needed, so they are working to correct them. Meeting again Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. They will now advise us on April 1<sup>st</sup> for a new start date. Our representatives are working hard to protect the church and make sure everything is correct.

### **Outdoor Ministry Phase III – Gloria Apple**

Mulch and curbing installed this week. Sign for Adult Supervision Required and Not Responsible for Accidents will be going up.

### **Task Force Update: Janet Ellis**

We are going to wait a couple more weeks before opening up all pews to make sure numbers remain low. Hymnals and Bibles will be wiped down and put back Saturday with hand sanitizer at the end of pews. Masks will remain optional. Things will be revisited in a few weeks.

### **Stained Glass Windows Update: Gloria Apple**

John Kozak has finished all the windows. Waiting on COVID to settle and will get help to mount them.

### **Youth Room Project Update: Gloria Apple**

Youth room is done and we are giving the couch back to the store that donated it. Once what needs removal is done then will give the okay for anything to be taken and cleared out.

### **New Business: Gloria Apple**

Stan and Tracey Byrd are going to paint the basement door to look better with all new interior improvements.

Cindy Hyle and the garden club doing things with youth. There will be a project on Mother's and Father's Day. They have begun seeds and plan on working on flowers around the portico.

Discussed "Children's PRAYground" in more detail and decided Gloria would investigate further with Trustees regarding removal of pews, ramifications and difficulty. As well as what might be done with such large pews. Once information is obtained, she will email us all for decisions to not delay the possibility.

Consistory members agreed Gloria would remind the congregation of the Steeple Fund during Sunday's service. Thank you for giving and reaching our goal but continue to give towards the \$100,000 potential cost.

Charge and Benediction

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting April 14th at 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lorie Arrington

Secretary

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### **♥ Youth Corner ♥**

#### May Events

- May 7th: flower bed cleanup
- May 15th: Disc Golf @Pleasant Garden Town Hall @5pm
- May 29th: Memorial Day weekend: Hagan stone park @4pm

#### **Mission for May - Please help us!**

#### **Continue to collect styrofoam**

A huge thank you to everyone who came out to last month's Zaxby's fundraiser!

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## **ANDY OPEN**

### **10th Annual Golf Tournament, Saturday, June 25th at Brookwood Golf Course.**

Proceeds to benefit Mt. Hope UCC Projects. See Dallas Belvin (336-601-1982), Janet Ellis, Dee Greeson, or Cathy Gossett for further information. Register by June 15th. Good times & great prizes! Sponsorships available! See You there!

### **Playground Dedication**

We had our playground dedication on Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup> while wearing blue for Autism Acceptance Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month.

We had a beautiful day to celebrate this long awaited project. Cat in the Hat came out to celebrate with us and the Stewardship Committee spearheaded a hot dog lunch. Thanks to all who donated items for the lunch and everyone who came out to celebrate this community playground.

*Children are a blessing and a gift from the Lord. Psalm 127:3*



### **Walkway at the playground**

*While the playground has been dedicated, work on the walkway from the parking lot over the drainage ditch had not begun at the time. We had a number of people who provided assistance all along for our playground projects including the Stewardship Committee members: Gloria Apple, Dee Greeson, Bennie Gerner, Cathy Gossett, Clifton Greeson, Simon Clark, and Becky Stafford. We are indebted to so many others who have supported playground work through their gifts. Those participating by working on planning for the walkway, funding materials, and providing transportation to and other services included: Pastor Kristin, Gloria's Jeryl, Dave Blakesley, Simon Clark, and Bill Craft to date. At this time, the four posts are set, the structural portions finished, the handrails and pickets installed. What remains is some sanding, painting and reflectors as well as some leveling work. The walkway is wide and should make the picnic shelter more handicapped friendly.*







## Coming Soon! Save the Date!

**Sunday, May 15** – Our final “**Gospel According to Dr. Seuss**” day. Horton Hears a Who will demonstrate how we need to listen carefully to cries for help. Worship in the NFH with popcorn and a movie!

**June 13-17** – **Music Camp & VBS** – 9:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, Friday evening Concert & Family Night for children who have just finished kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.





## WISE Moment

### *Education counters bias, stigma and fear*

After over 2 years of the pandemic many young children, teens, and adults suffer with anxiety. We all may feel stressed out over our *new normal* as we return to in-school classrooms, workplaces, and churches. We are like butterflies emerging from their cocoons. Meditation, exercise, yoga, and eating healthy are a few things we can do to ease anxiety. Recognizing anxiety is the first step in handling these new feelings. An example of a young child or teen feeling anxious or stressed may be seeing them pull a hoodie up over their heads even on the hottest days and become sullen.

Young children's symptoms:

- Trouble sleeping
- Complaint about stomachache or other physical conditions
- Avoiding certain situations
- Being clingy around parents or other caregivers
- Trouble concentrating in class or being very fidgety
- Tantrums
- Being very self-conscious

Teenager's symptoms:

- Recurring fears and worries about routine parts of everyday life
- Irritability
- Trouble concentrating
- Extreme self-consciousness or sensitivity to criticism
- Withdrawal from social activity
- Avoidance of difficult or new situations
- Chronic complaints about headaches or stomach ache
- Drop in grades or school refusal
- Repeated reassurance-seeking
- Sleep problems



- Substance abuse

 **THANK YOU** 

Adult symptoms:

- Feeling nervous, restless or tense
- Having a sense of impending danger, panic or doom
- Having an increased heart rate or breathing rapidly (hyperventilating)
- Sweating, trembling, feeling weak or tired
- Trouble concentrating or thinking about anything other than the present worry
- Having trouble sleeping
- Experiencing gastrointestinal problems
- Having difficulty controlling worry
- Having the urge to avoid things that trigger anxiety
- Substance abuse

A Coping Toolbox is a simple thing you can make to help relieve your anxiety. The toolbox is adaptable for children, teens, and adults. Check out how to make one below. Some Coping Tool Boxes will be available in the Church office on a first-come first-serve basis beginning May 16<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/wellness/story/make-coping-tool-box-kids-amid-mental-health-82908774?fbclid=IwAR3NRsmFKJj2MQS2WuFLz81Th-ZBhbMX22NmMkLybH9ITWCp2PZetHT7c>

Check out the NAMI website for more information on mental well-being.

**The WISE Team is looking for donations** of 6 bottles of glitter glue, and 20 soft stuffed animals no larger than the size of a 16-20 oz soft drink bottle. We will be using the items to make coping boxes for children who suffer from anxiety and other mental health concerns. The items are needed by May 4th.

Thank you for all the calls, text, prayers, and support for Tony Stewart and Kelly Stanley during their time of need.

Dear Church family,

Thank you very much for the lovely cards you sent during my illness. They were greatly appreciated. Thank you again.

Love,  
Pat Levens

Thank you for the cards, thoughts, and prayers during my shoulder surgery recovery. We are blessed with a great church family and friends.

Don Ellis

Thank you to all of the musicians who helped make Holy Week so special: the choir, the handbell choir, Andrew Beach and Ekin Ustunel, Judy Gerner and Kristin Gerner Vaughn, John Kozak and Emma and Kathryn Vaughn. Thank you for sharing your musical talents with us.

Susan Finley & Mt Hope Church Family

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Our April meeting was very meaningful as Marcia shared her experience of being in the Holy Land during Holy Week. We talked about some of our experiences of past Holy Weeks as we ate a snack of Matzo that is a form of the ancient kind of unleavened bread acceptable during the Jewish holiday of Passover.

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Please join us for our next meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. in the new fellowship hall. We will end our study of Marcia's book *Holy Moley God, You've Got to Be Kidding!* by talking about *thin places* (a place where you can walk between two worlds such as this world and the eternal world) and *laughter*. We look forward to seeing you!

Blessings,

Dee Greeson

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## Welcome to our new members !!



Mike & Barbara Vaughn      Barb 336-207-8924  
1914 Anders Court      [Mikebarb27408@aol.com](mailto:Mikebarb27408@aol.com)  
Whitsett, NC 27377      Mike 336-207-8925



Jacob Arrington      Gary Strader  
4307 Old Julian Rd      4307 Old Julian  
Julian, NC 27283      Julian, NC 27283  
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Libby Lowdermilk      Home 336-697-3880  
5321 Amick Road      [libbylowdermilk1@spectrum.net](mailto:libbylowdermilk1@spectrum.net)  
Julian, NC 27283

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## CEMETERY COMMITTEE - MOWING

The cemetery grounds were cleaned recently and flowers and other decorations in the way of mowers and workers using weed eaters have been placed in the baskets attached to the shed next to Baseman Road. You are welcome to come get your decorations. Please never place glass, plaster or wire figurines or clay containers anywhere in the cemetery during mowing season since shards are extremely hazardous for the mowers. EXCEPTION: Flowers and other decorations may be placed in the grassy areas for special occasions such as Mother's Day but not before late Saturday afternoon before the special day and flowers should be removed at the beginning of the following week. Thank you!





Sunday, May 1

10:30 am Worship  
11:30 am Gather, Learn, & Grow  
11:30 am Youth & Children Music  
5:00 pm No Youth Meeting

Monday, May 2

6:00 pm Yoga with Sonia

Tuesday, May 3

7:00 pm Garden Club - NFH

Wednesday, May 4

10:00 am Bible Study - NFH  
7:00 pm Choir Practice

Thursday, May 5

8:00 am, Yoga with Sonia

Saturday May 7

11:00 am, Youth flower bed cleanup

Sunday, May 8

10:30 Worship  
11:30 am Gather, Learn, & Grow  
11:30 am, Youth & Children Music  
5:00 pm No Youth Meeting

Monday, May 9

6:00 pm Yoga with Sonia

Tuesday, May 10

7:00 pm Women's Fellowship - NFH

Wednesday, May 11

10:00 am Bible Study - NFH  
7:00 pm Choir practice

Thursday, May 12

8:00 am Yoga with Sonia  
7:00 pm Consistory

Saturday, May 14

7:30 am - 2:00 pm Mt Hope Fire Dept Yard

Sale

Sunday, May 15

10:30 am Worship in NFH / Dr Seuss -Movie  
11:30 am Gather, Learn Grow  
11:30 am Youth & Children Music  
1:30 pm Board of Christian Ed meeting  
5:00 pm Youth disc golf @Pleasant Garden

Town Hall

Monday, May 16

8:00 am Yoga with Sonia  
5:30 pm W.I.S.E. Meeting - NFH  
6:30 pm Stewardship - Conf. Rm

Wednesday, May 18

10:00 am Bible Study - NFH  
7:00 pm Choir Practice

Thursday, May 19

8:00 am Yoga with Sonia

Friday, May 20

Wellness Weekend 6-8 pm

Saturday, May 21

Wellness Weekend 8 am -12 pm

Sunday, May 22

10:30 am Worship / Picnic at Lake  
MacKintosh - Hotdog lunch included / Music &  
Fellowship

5:00 pm No Youth Meeting

Monday, May 23

8:00 am Yoga with Sonia

Wednesday, May 25

10:00 am Bible Study - NFH  
7:00 pm Choir Practice

Thursday, May 26

8:00 am Yoga with Sonia

Sunday, May 29

10:30 am Worship / Communion  
11:30 am Gather, Learn, Grow  
11:30 am Youth & children music  
4:00 pm Youth - Hagan Stone Park

Monday, May 30

6:00 pm Yoga with Sonia





## May Birthdays

1st Pam Deaton  
 3rd Kaitlyn Jones  
 4th Jeff Harris  
 6th Barbara Greeson  
 7th Luke Greeson  
     Susan Finley  
 8th Tyler Strouth  
 9th Jeff Welker  
     Cynthia Hyle  
 12th Janet Ellis  
     Gail Prevost  
 13th Lorie Arrington

14th Sylvia Belvin  
     Peggy Barber  
     Haywood Levens  
     Joshua Apple  
 17th Ray Neese, Sr.  
     Emma Earhart  
 18th Austin Oliver  
 19th Doris Walsh  
 20th Phillip Nelson  
     Madison Jarrett  
     Freddie Gossett  
 21st Christina Greeson  
 22nd Brian Neal  
 24th Peggy Levens  
 27th Jason Shinn  
     John McDade  
 28th Maria Sbityakov  
     Peggy Greeson  
     Aveleen Craft  
 29th Emma Perez  
     Addison Harris

## 💖 May Anniversaries 💖

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Cynthis Morris & Thomas Bowles | May 6th  |
| Simon & Brittany Clark         | May 8th  |
| Blake & Dorie Whitman          | May 10th |
| Richard & Amanda Freeman       | May 13th |
| Jeremy & Sara Oehling          | May 14th |
| Cole & Shannon Levens          | May 15th |
| John & Melinda McDade          | May 21st |
| Joseph & Michelle Moser        | May 21st |
| Joe & Cindy Hughes             | May 22nd |
| David & Debra Prater           | May 25th |
| Bob & Cindy Hamlett            | May 26th |
| Bill & Elizabeth Craft         | May 29th |
| Gerald & Linda Greeson         | May 30th |



### **Health Care Center**

|                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Alamance House             | R. Denny Ingold (#112) |
| Clapp's Nursing Center     | Robert Ingold (#710)   |
| Ralph Scott Homes          | Betty Kim Settlemyre   |
| Brookdale Burlington       | Peggie Coble (#74)     |
| Twin Lakes                 | Darlene Cherry         |
| Blakey Hall                | Jeanne Ingold (#212)   |
| Alamance Healthcare Center | William Andrews (#55)  |

### **Mt. Hope Military Connections**

|             |                    |                  |                    |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Scott Amick | Grant Harden       | Josh Ellis       | Michael Terraforte |
| Kyle Gerner | Megan Moore Hughes | Abigail Thompson |                    |

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### **Members, Friends, & Relatives**

|                                       |                                    |                      |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Betty & Richard Kime                  | <b>Lori Oliver - friend of Amy</b> | <b>Ilene Lanhum</b>  |
| Pat Levens                            | <b>Thompson</b>                    | <b>Shirley Tyson</b> |
| LuEller Ingold                        | <b>Brian Smith</b>                 |                      |
| J.R. Shoffner                         | <b>Adelita Swaim</b>               |                      |
| Bill Welker                           | <b>Wayne Reece</b>                 |                      |
| Lloyd & Sylvia Gilliam                | <b>Shane Swaim</b>                 |                      |
| Sharon Nance                          | <b>Goldie Sawyer</b>               |                      |
| Nancy Wimbish                         | <b>Barbara Humble</b>              |                      |
| Mandy Levens                          | <b>Ricky Clapp (Bubba)</b>         |                      |
| <b>Nancy Phipps</b>                   | <b>Katie Stevens</b>               |                      |
| <b>Libby Lowdermilk</b>               | <b>David Foster Family</b>         |                      |
| <b>Ukraine &amp; people of Russia</b> | <b>Kim Hamby</b>                   |                      |
| <b>Peggy Welker</b>                   | <b>Joan May</b>                    |                      |
| <b>Steve &amp; Peggy Burns</b>        | <b>Peg Burns</b>                   |                      |
| <b>Tyler Stewart</b>                  | <b>Mike Vaughn</b>                 |                      |
| <b>Helen Levens</b>                   | <b>Judy Gerner</b>                 |                      |
| <b>Steeple Workers</b>                | <b>Noral &amp; Cindy Belvin</b>    |                      |