

MAY 2025

MT HOPE MESSENGER

MT. HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OFFICE HOURS: M, W, & F (8AM - 3PM)



2400 Mt. Hope Church Road
Whitsett, NC 27377

Pastor - Rev. Kristin Gerner Vaughn
Cell 336-402-2897

Email:
mthopeuccpastor@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant &
Director of Digital Technology
Lorie Arrington
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Director of Youth & Children Ministry
& Music Director
Julianna Pierdomenico
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Email: mthopeuccmusic@gmail.com

Accompanist - Ekin Üstünel

Consistory President - Gloria Apple

Board of Christian Education
Susan Finley



Sunday for Worship
at 10:00 am



Pastor's Note



A Love Letter from your Pastor: Taking Sabbath Rest Seriously”

“Daniel pauses to sip his tea,” Julia Cameron writes in her book, *The Listening Path: The Creative Art of Attention*. “His brow is creased in concentration. He asks me, “Does anybody listen anymore? Too often, people are listening to push their own agenda. True listening requires you to tune in, surrender your agenda, really understand what the other person is thinking, really listen to what is in their heart.” I had this book sitting on my shelf, a gift given to me by a dear friend, when I received my star word at church this year, “Attention.” I give my attention to so many things. Maybe this word wasn’t for me. Then I remembered the story of my own daughter having to call me “Kristin” to get my attention from the crowd that gathered after worship when she was 4. Giving attention to something, listening, is a very intricate assignment if done with integrity. Here are a few quotations from all walks of life that have helped me begin to understand what the Magi brought me and what my dear friend already knew I needed.

“Most people do not listen with the intent of understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

–Stephen R. Covey

“Listening is a form of spiritual hospitality by which you invite strangers to become friends, to get to know their inner selves more fully, and even to dare to be silent with you.” -- Henri Nouwen

“There is a difference between truly listening and waiting for your turn to talk.” --Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person they are almost indistinguishable.”

– David Augsburger

God leads me beside the still waters. God restores my soul—Psalm 23

The season of pastoral Sabbatical, the spiritual practice of rest for a pastor has arrived. Truth be told it is quite overdue. Much like God created in 6 days and took one seventh of the time to rest, pastors are also commanded to rest on the 7th year. It was supposed to happen 2 years ago. I have never gotten high marks during my annual pastoral reviews on self-care. So, to honor the covenant that we share together, I am paying close attention to this part of my agreement to serve you, that I will take a sabbatical. I will take a break for the soul purpose to rest and pay attention to the myriad of other relationships, events, opportunities that get ignored while tending to the needs of a flock. Sabbaticals are important because a healthy church has a healthy pastor.

The sabbatical season will begin for us (and my us, I mean the pastor and the church) on May 1st. I will return on May 18th. While I am away, you will be well cared for by Rev. Dr. Ken Clapp who will be supplying the pulpit and caring for the precious flock of Mt. Hope while I am away. Dr. Clapp is Vice President and Chaplain of Catawba College, Emeritus and a son of the Mt. Hope community and congregation. Rev. Micah Hardy-Royal will also be here to help fill the pulpit one Sunday. Rev. Hardy-Royal is currently serving as a Hospice Chaplain in Raleigh, NC.

I will be praying for you and I ask that you pray for me as we share in this time together. If you would like to read one of the books I am using for my spiritual growth during the next few weeks, I invite you to check out, *Cherished Belonging: The healing Power of Love In Divided Times* by Gregory Boyle.

Love,
Pastor Kristin





Garden club will meet at 3 pm on Tuesday, May 6th. A silent auction will be held and everyone is welcome to attend. Come join us for some fellowship and fun!



No BCE meeting in May. The next one will be June 8th as a combined meeting for BCE and VBS volunteers. It will be held in the old fellowship Hall, and a snack lunch will be served.

Susan



Women's Fellowship May 13th @ 10 am in the New Fellowship Hall

Slinky's and beads and Three questions: Questions for God, Questions about God, and Questions God Asks filled our April meeting. Our imaginations were at work with our slinkys and beans and questions.

For May, we will continue with our slinkys and beans and our questions, so please bring those props to our meeting. Please read Movement Two Yoke. Our imaginations will be stretched as we consider: The Bible is Difficult. The Bible is open ended. The Bible causes confusion. How is the Bible your story? How did we get the Bible?

Rob Bell asks us to consider, "What is the difference between viewing the Bible as an owner's manual and viewing the Bible as, 'the wild, uncensored, passionate account...of people experiencing the living God? See you May 13th. Along with the above, bring your imagination and questions, Marcia



Thank you! Alamance Plaza's Resident Services Coordinator , Anna Green after 20 years of service, to the community is resigning. Many of us have enjoyed working with Anna and are thankful for all the ways she has served the residents. Anna, Thank you for helping Mt. Hope connect with a community that has become apart of us over the last 13 years. We wish you well and we welcome Alicia Donavant as the next Alamance Plaza, Resident Services Coordinator. We look forward to working alongside you!

Thank You

Dear Church Family,
Thank you for celebrating my birthday with me and for all the nice cards.

Anna Korman



There have been several asking about Michael Hughes and his address. Here is an update. His surgery is now scheduled for the middle of June at the Mayo Clinic and he will go 3 weeks prior to that for radiation treatments.

Michael & Kim Hughes
5544 S. Xenon Way
Littleton, CO 80127

**Mark your Calendar. The 13th Annual the Andy Open Golf Tournament
In Memory of Glenda and Dean Andrews**

Saturday, June 21st - (Rain date June 28)

Brookwood Golf Course

Help us make this our best tournament ever - We need Players and Sponsors



PLAYERS

Player Registration \$ 50 Per Golfer \$220 Per Team

Deadline to register: June 16th

Registration fee includes: Green Fee and Cart Fee

Breakfast Biscuit and Lunch Including - Homemade Desserts
Water and Soft Drinks

Optional Fees: Gimmick Hole and Mulligans

SPONSORS

All sponsors will have a sponsor sign on the course

Hole Sponsor \$50 Memorial Sign \$25 Cooler Sponsor \$50



Captains Choice Format – 9:00 a.m. Shotgun Start

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Prizes Include:

Closest to Pin – Longest Drive Men – Longest Drive Ladies – Longest Drive Seniors (65+)

Cash Prizes for First, Second and Third Place Teams

All proceeds to benefit Mt. Hope UCC Special Projects

For More Information Call:

Dallas Belvin 336-601-1982

Southern Conference - Calling All Middle and High School Students - Let's Talk!

by Rev. Belinda Sledge

Beginning April 13th, as a youth initiative originating at Union Chapel United Church of Christ and as a start to events leading up to the youth event for 2026, the Southern Conference invites all middle and high school students to join us via Zoom for an unconventional Bible study experience from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The 2nd Sunday is devoted to studying a book from the Bible, and the 4th Sunday features a pre-planned topic of choice that impacts your daily life, with either a participant leading the discussion or an outside guest. If you are a young adult in the 20s age group, we also welcome you to participate on both Sundays to share the wisdom you have obtained during your younger years. The time together will be facilitated by Rev. Belinda Sledge, Coordinator for the Southern Conference 2024 Youth Event.

You will use the same Zoom link each Sunday:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82852871663?pwd=iu6pSdNCSviKKiRFT7HTz052eVj54E.1>

Meeting ID: 828 5287 1663

Passcode: 506260

Dial In:

• +1 305 224 1968 US



Our Youth group consists of ages 6th - 12th grade and they meet on Sundays at 12 pm if you know of someone that would like to join! All are welcome!



UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

MAY
4

YOUTH MEETING

12pm in the youth room.

MAY
25

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

No meeting.

MAY
11

MOTHER'S DAY

No meeting. Happy Mother's Day to all the moms!

MAY
31

PEACEHAVEN FARM VOLUNTEERING

Meet at Mt. Hope at 8:40am. Note this is a Saturday! 9-11am.

MAY
18

TRIVIA

Parents/grandparents vs. youth!
12pm in the youth room.

JUNE
1

GRADUATION SUNDAY

Celebration following worship for our graduates this year.

Save the Date

If interested in John's River Valley Summer Camps:

Weeks for rising 6-8th graders are June 29th-July 5th and July 13th-19th

Weeks for rising 9-12 graders are July 6th-12th and July 13th-19th

More info can be found at jvrc.org/summer-camps

Graduation Sundaylet us know about your graduate!



"Know someone you love that graduated or is graduating this year? We want to celebrate them! On June 1st, we will celebrate all of our graduates. Julianna is compiling information for that service. If you have a graduate in your life, please contact Julianna by May 16th so that she can get more information from you to help us celebrate."

Julianna Pierdomenico - mthopeuccyouth@gmail.com



Wise Moment

WISE Moment...BE KIND TO YOUR MIND In May, the UCC supports mental health through Mental Health Sunday, May 18 and Mental Health Awareness Month. We at Mt Hope advocate to prioritize our well-being and promote open conversations about mental health in our congregation and community. We encourage everyone to "Be Kind to your Mind" and join together to support each other in mind, body and spirit. WISE will be hosting three Mindful Mondays in May. Mindful Mondays are a way to start the week by incorporating mindfulness practices to manage stress. Join us in the gathering room on May 5 at 2:00 for a Mindful Moment to practice deep breathing and being present in the moment. On May 12 at 6:00 pm we will gather to watch the award winning movie "A Beautiful Mind", and on May 19 at 11:30 am you can attend a "Feed Your Mind and Body Cooking Class" at the NC Cooperative Extension. If your heart desires, to perform a planned act of kindness we will have a kindness board in the narthex. You can pick a tag containing a needed act of kindness for a specific member of our congregation. Kindness has a powerful positive impact on mental health when shown to self and others. Studies show that acts of kindness can reduce stress, improve mood, boost self esteem and increase feelings of happiness and well-being. Join with us and "Be Kind to Your Mind"!

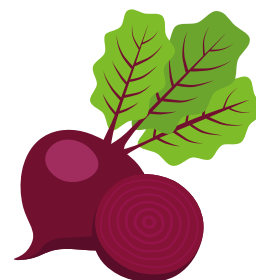
Did you know we have a Styrofoam Recycling Trailer at Mt. Hope?

Did you know we have a Styrofoam Recycling Trailer at Mt. Hope?

We do! Did you know it isn't biodegradable? It's easily littered because it is lightweight and breaks easily, and carried by storms.

Below is some information you may not know!

I get lots of calls about packing peanuts!



The Women's Fellowship are preparing to can beets in late May or June. Donations of 1 gallon containers of apple cider vinegar and 5 pound bags of sugar would be greatly appreciated. If you are able to donate, just leave the items inside the narthex or portico entrance at church or see Judy Gerner or Dee Greeson.



Mt Hope United Church of Christ
Consistory Minutes March 13, 2025

Members Present: Dave Blakesley, Simon Clark, Tammy Holt, Dora Moore, Sharon Mims, Tracy Buff, Cindy McGee

The meeting was called to order by Dave Blakesley, a quorum was established, and all were welcomed.
Lighting of the Christ Candle

A devotional was provided by Simon Clark reminding us that the Holy Spirit is our teacher and we receive wisdom when we listen. This wisdom can lead us to be doers not just hearers of the Word.

We Celebrate our Past

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Dora Moore and seconded by Cindy McGee to approve the minutes from the February 2025 consistory meeting. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

February 2025 Consolidated Fund Activity Report showed a balance of \$181,580.80 with receipts of \$20,747.95 and Disbursements of \$17,183.78 reported. A motion was made by Tracy Buff and seconded by Sharon Mims to approve the report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Kristin reminded us of the 3 new members participating in the New Member Class. Consistory members were urged to try and come to the March 16 class to meet with them and share information about our congregation.

There was one death in the church during the past month, Ray Neese, Jr.

A presentation regarding connecting and communicating with people will be held Wednesday, March 19th, 5:30-7:30 with a meal provided.

Pastor Kristin will be taking time off during the first three Sundays in May to make plans for her Sabbatical later in the year. More details will be provided later.

The Food Ministry Task Force is working to assess needs in the community, determine the surrounding poverty level and make plans to help educate the church regarding these needs and the role we might have in addressing them. There continue to be many people in need of prayers in our church community.

Committee Reports

*Board of Christian Education Will be working with Men of Valor to sponsor a mattress collection for refugee community.

*Maintenance and Trustees balcony repair to be done this month.

*Stewardship

*Historical

*Mission & Outreach Work by Food Ministry Task Force continues.

*Music & Worship Worship at Lake Mackintosh will be Sunday August 24th.

*Social Concerns sufficient donations for the 2nd well have been reached. Work has begun for a 3rd well.

*Communications Looking into Windows 11. Updating will be needed. Encouraged everyone to visit the website in order to appear at a higher level during searches, for those looking.

*WISE Team - WISE is very busy. Partnering with Piedmont Bird Club for a bird walk held on March 20th, will have a Puddle Club for jewelry making prior to Mother's Day (April 11th 4:30pm), We will be sponsoring Mindful Mondays on May 5 (meditation and mindfulness), May 12 (movie: A Beautiful Mind), May 19th partnering with Mustard Seed for a Cooking class) to highlight Mental Health Sunday on May 18th.

*Fellowship Committee

*Personnel

Prayer of Intercession

Prayers were offered for those in Rehab and Hospice Care, as well as those healing from surgery, facing cancer treatments, and grieving the loss of loved ones.

Old Business

Trustees Report from last month: change anode rod to aluminum or zinc and run Clorox mixture through to address water issue (Stan Buff). Contact for repair of columns out front was not able to help. Need to find someone else (Phillip Strouth)

New Business

-Women's group is looking into area behind the stage to use funds from their fundraiser to improve it. Will be reaching out to a basement company for input. Will do so with Trustees involvement.

-Youth trip to do repair work needed after Hurricane Helene at John's River Valley Camp on Saturday March 15th. Will also be delivering pet supplies for those who are in need following storm damage.

Charge and Benediction

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Mims

Let's celebrate with Connie Kotis...as she receives her Honorary Degree at UNCG. The Doctoral honor will be given at the Doctoral and Master's Commencement Ceremony. This is a milestone occasion in Connie's life, and we are glad to celebrate this momentous occasion with her and the wider community. You are invited to attend in person or to view the livestream of Connie's speech and ceremony at 10:00 am at the First Horizon Greensboro Coliseum, Thursday, May 8th. Below is the link to join online. If you wish to join in person, please call the church office for the details about parking and reserved seating.

Congratulations, Connie!

Live-stream

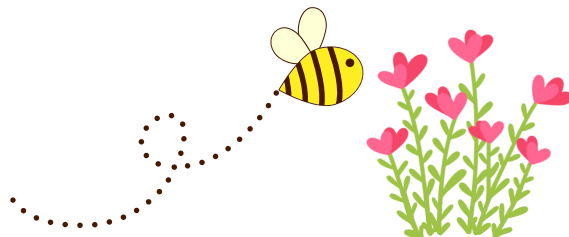
If you cannot attend the ceremony, but would still love to tune in, we are providing a live stream on the Commencement Central website. I am providing the direct link to the livestream below, however **it will not be active until the day of the event.**



[LIVE-STREAM YOUTUBE LINK](#)



May



- 4th - Worship @ 10 am with Communion - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 - Youth @ 12 pm
- 6th - Garden Club @ 3pm - Silent Auction - Come join the fellowship & fun! All are welcome!
- 7th - Choir Practice @ 7 pm
- 8th - Consistory @ 6:00 pm
- 11th - Mother's Day
- 11th - Worship @ 10 am - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 - No Youth
- 12th - Men of Valor @ 6:30 pm in the OFH
- 13th - Women's Fellowship @ 10 am in the New Fellowship Hall
- 14th - Choir Practice @ 7 pm
- 18th - Worship @ 10 am with Communion - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15
- 18th - Parents/Grandparents vs. Youth Trivia @ 12 pm in Youth Room
- 19th - Men of Valor @ 6:30 pm in Old Fellowship Hall
- 20th - Friends & Neighbors @ 10:30 am - NFH
- 20th - WISE Meeting @ 5:30 pm in Gathering Room
- 21st - Music & Worship @ 5:30 pm
- 21st - Choir Practice @ 7 pm
- 22nd - NO YOGA
- 25th - Worship @ 10 am - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 am - No Youth
- 28TH - Choir Practice @ 7 pm
- 31st - Peacehaven Farm Volunteering (youth meet @ church 8:40 am)

*Yoga on Monday and Thursday in the NFH at 5:30 pm each week.

*Please know every is welcome to attend any event.

*We love to have you bring a friend or invite your neighbor! Share His word!



Happy Anniversary

Cynthia Morris & Thomas Bowles 5/6

Simon & Brittany Clark 5/8

Blake & Dorie Whitman 5/10

Richard & Amanda Freeman 5/13

Jeremy & Sara Oehling 5/14

Cole & Shannon Levens 5/15

Mike & Lisa Johnson 5/16

Joseph & Michelle Moser 5/21

John & Melinda McDade 5/21

Darrel & Debbie Harris 5/21

Joe & Cindy Hughes 5/22

David & Debra Prater 5/25

Bob & Cindy Hamlett 5/26

Bill & Elizabeth Craft 5/29 (60 years)

Gerald & Linda Greeson 5/30

1st Zeb Mims

3rd Kaitlyn Jones

4th Jeff Harris

6th Barbara Greeson

7th Luke Greeson

Quincy Elzey

8th Tyler Strouth

9th Jeffrey Welker

9th Cindy Hyle

12th Janet Ellis

13th Lorie Arrington

14th Peggy Barner

Sylvia Belvin

Haywood Levens

Joshua Apple

17th Ray Neese, Sr.

Emma Earhart

18th Austin Oliver

19th Doris Walsh

20th Phillip Nelson

Madison Whitaker

21st Kaitlyn Woollett

Christina Greeson

23rd Brian Neal

24th Peggy Levens

27th Phil Fittante

John McDade

28th Maria Sbityakov

Pattie Greeson

Aveleen Craft

29th Addison Harris

Prayer Concerns

Health Care Center

Alamance House - R. Denny Ingold (#305)

Clapp's Nursing Center - Robert Ingold (#801)

Blumenthal Health & Rehab Center - Harold Reece, Jr.

Lin Gallagher - Linden Place - (#108)

Linda Ayers - Ashton Place - (#304)

Phyllis Clapp O'Daniel - Carteret Landing - #C07

Mail information for Phyllis O.

Carteret Landing

221 Friendly Rd. / Rm C07

Morehead City, NC 28557



Mt. Hope Military Connections

Michael Terraforte

Solomon Price, Jr.

Kyle Gerner

Scott Amick

Wade Greeson

Members, Friends, & Relatives

Joan May

Linda Neese

Christina Oliver

Baby Otto

Kaylan Murray

Lizzie Honey

Krissy Coomer

Betty Neese

Barbara S. Frizzola

Steve Burns

Cindy Hamlett

Amanda Levens

Debra Prater

Michael Hughes

Emma Jean Greeson

Shirley Harris

Ralph O'Ferrell

Mary Catherine Moser

Woody & Peggy Levens

Peggy Greeson

Jayne Brown

Clifton Greeson

Ava Straughn

Ray Apple

Daniel Piazza

Brianna Chapmon

Noral & Cindy Belvin

Geri Lyn Welker

Barb - Marcia's sister

Von Clapp

Orlando Stone

Marie Butler

Lori Wrenner

Adam Fronicus

PRAYER
TIME

Faith
Hope
Love

