

Mt. Hope United Church of Christ

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Church Pastor

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Accompanist

Ekin Ustunel

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Interim Music Director

Susan Finley

Church Secretary

Stacey Martin

Office hours:

Monday – Friday
9 am – 1 pm

Consistory President

Dallas Belvin

Board of Christian Education

Susan Finley, Director



Mt. Hope Messenger May 2021

Singing a Welcome to Susan

Beginning May 5th, Susan Finley, will serve as our interim Music Director while the personnel committee conducts a search for a full-time Music Director. We are grateful for Susan and her willingness to share her vast experience in and passion for church music and directing with us.

Susan grew up in a musical household, with parents who enjoyed singing, as well as playing piano and handbells, mostly at church.

She became a student of music herself while in elementary school, participating in church vocal and handbell choirs, and taking piano lessons from the church organist. She later learned to play recorder, flute, piccolo and organ.

At the age of 13, Susan felt called to pursue church ministry as a vocation in the areas of music and education. A graduate of Mars Hill College, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Susan earned degrees and certifications in the areas of music, elementary, and gifted education, church music and education, theology, and childhood development. Susan was also chosen as one of the first recipients of the Mars Hill College Church Leadership Scholarship.

Susan has worked as both a part-time and full-time staff minister in churches ranging in size from 75 to 7,000 members. She has served churches in North Carolina, Virginia,

Georgia and Texas as Minister of Music, Education, Children and Youth. During Susan's years of service in various churches, she, her parents and siblings often led worship services with a variety of special music.

Susan has taught school and worked as a substitute teacher in Buncombe County, Alamance-Burlington, and Guilford County school systems. Currently, Susan uses her insurance and securities licenses to help people achieve their financial security goals.

A native of Alamance County, Susan resides in Whitsett, NC with her cockapoo furry child Mickey. She has a passion for helping those in need, occasionally serving as a wedding officiant, donating time and material goods to organizations that provide food, clothing and job assistance, and serving churches as an active volunteer.

Welcome Susan! We are so glad you are here.



A message from the Covid Team:

With gratitude for the work of the Spirit in our Congregation over the last year, our Task Force and Consistory are excited to share a plan to move to in-person sanctuary worship in May, together with other in-person building uses. The final weeks of April/May will continue our practice of in-person outdoor worship, allowing time to set plans in place for a smooth return to the sanctuary. The first three weeks of May will serve as a time of preparation for a full return on May 23, Pentecost Sunday. Throughout the summer months, we will continue to build our in-person offerings,

increase capacity, and resume other elements of our ministry as safe and advisable. As we re-open and move inside for worship and other gatherings, we will continue to practice safety measures of masking and social distancing.

This plan is both careful and hopeful, and will continue the practices of planning, evaluation, and healthy experimentation we have utilized throughout this pandemic. Special thanks to our COVID-19 Task Force for their leadership, and to our entire congregation for the creativity, faithfulness and commitments to safety and inclusion that have characterized this last year and will continue to carry us forward.



Volunteer Spotlight:

Cindy Hyle

Last year while we were staying in place, little seeds were in the ground sheltering in grace. When the children couldn't get out to come to church, Cindy Hyle had a vision, "Let's plant a pizza garden in the circle of rocks where nothing is growing." Soon a couple of tomato plants, pepper plants, chives, and a few herbs were planted in the round circle of space between the rocks in the hopes that when Covid was "over" we would have all that we needed to make and dress a pizza for the kids to enjoy together.

What happened next was nothing short of the Holy Spirit at work among us. As soon as Cindy put the first few plants in the ground, others who were also trying their hands at backyard gardens started calling the church to see if we could use a few extra plants they didn't have room to plant. Joan Hedrick brought spinach plants from her family garden, Rocky and Cheryl Royal brought some needed

mulch, church neighbors whom I had yet to meet saw the garden growing and offered items from their own garden. The really cool part was being reminded, even in the midst of a pandemic, that hope was happening in those buried seeds. Not only was growth happening in the ground, but people were coming together.

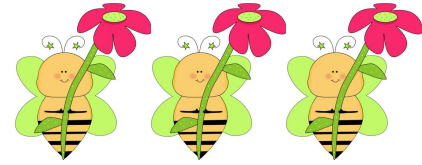
See what God can do when we allow our gifts to be used to the glory of God? Cindy Hyle has a gift for gardens. She has worked for decades in the greenhouse business, raising plants, planning gardens and assisting customers in the purchasing of plants and taking care of plants. Cindy served as a gardener for the Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden of Kernersville. She has a vast knowledge of plants and is willing to teach anyone who wants to learn. She has often brightened the home of many homebound members with flowers from her own yard.

Cindy is a beautiful flower in the Mt. Hope garden often using flowers as an outreach tool to bring new members of the community into the Mt. Hope Church fold. When Cindy learned that Alamance Plaza, a government assisted housing complex in Burlington wanted access to fresh fruits and vegetables, Cindy and Mt. Hope Church went into action. Now Alamance Plaza has a beautiful garden nestled inside the brick planters on the patio beside their building. Cindy has taught the residents how to care for and harvest the vegetables. This activity has brought hope and excitement to residents of all ages and abilities.

The community garden at Mt. Hope is now in its second year of growth.

Cindy, thank you for sharing your gifts with us and by doing so extending our outreach and mission in the community and beyond. We are thankful for you and your willingness to share your gifts so the Holy could use them to “draw us in the spirit’s tether.”

Stop by the garden and see what all is growing. The garden’s produce is available to anyone. If you would like to try something please feel free to take what you need. Have you tried the pineapple sage or the golden oregano? Great for family pizza night!!



WISE Church--Mental Health Sunday

During a Bible Study last summer it became clear that God was calling Mt. Hope to be begin a conversation about being a WISE Church. The WISE Conversation is an ongoing discussion about how Mt. Hope can be a Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaging church for mental health. On Sunday, May 16th the WISE Team will be assisting in worship as we recognize Mental Health Sunday during worship. We will bless the work of the WISE team and learn more about their mission. Mental Health challenges, such as substance use disorders, neurodevelopmental differences, brain disorders, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and many others are a host of mental disorders that affect at least 1 out of every 4 people in the United States and yet it is an illness that cannot be seen, is often misunderstood and frequently those who suffer from unmanaged symptoms are forgotten. Did you know that on average someone who needs help for mental health do not receive the medical attention they need for at least 10 years after the first signs of illness? Can you imagine having a broken arm or a bleeding ulcer for 10 years before receiving help?

The WISE Team will soon sponsor opportunities for church and community members to learn about mental health and mental health challenges so that we can stand with the 25% of our community members that need our love, support and care.

Come join us for Mental Health Sunday on May 16th! Let’s get WISE together!

5 Simple Things You Can Do to make the world a better place for people with mental health challenges and their families:

1. Be a friend. Provide companionship and compassion on the road toward recovery. Offer a ride to church or to a local support group. Listen without judgement. Pray for those you know with mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and for their family members.

2. Share your story. Has mental illness impacted you or your family in some way? Your story may empower others to seek treatment or have hope.
3. Watch your language. Pay attention to the words you use and avoid stigmatizing labels. Do not refer to people as “crazy,” “psycho,” “lunatic” or “mental.”
4. Be a “StigmaBuster.” Challenge negative attitudes toward mental illness among your friends and acquaintances and in the media.
5. Learn the facts. Educate yourself about the various mental health challenges, substance use disorders, neurodevelopmental differences, and other brain disorders. Check out the resources at the UCC Mental Health Network (www.mhn-ucc.org), take a Mental Health First Aid class and host one at your congregation for the larger community. Offer a class or a support group with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org) and check out the facts at the National Institute of Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov), the US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (www.samhsa.gov), the Alzheimer’s Association (www.alz.org). Visit the Mental Health Commission of Canada for education, supports and programs related to mental wellness <http://mentalhealthcommission.ca/>



Thank you – From the family of Lorena Levens, we thank you for all the years you showed your love

and support to Lorena. If there was anything going on at the church, she wanted to be there. We appreciate all the help and support from Pastor Kristin and friends. Thank you, The Levens Family

Thank you – I just wanted to thank you all for everything you do for us at Alamance Plaza. God Bless you! Lena Williams Apt. 306



Condolences: We would like to offer our prayers and Christian sympathies to the family of Jeffrey “Lawson” Welker.

Casey & Cody Gorrell
 6328 Beulah Church Rd.
 Liberty, NC 27298

Peggie Coble
 Brookdale Burlington
 3619 S. Mebane St.
 Burlington, NC 27215



Mt. Hope United Church of Christ
Consistory Zoom Meeting
 3-11-21

Members Present: Gloria Apple, Lorie Arrington, Dallas Belvin, Noral Belvin, David Blakesley, Simon Clark, Bill Craft, Janet Ellis, Cathy Gossett, Cole Levens and Dora Moore

Pastor Present: Pastor Kristin

The meeting was called to order at 7:04p.m. A quorum was established and Dallas welcomed all and opened with prayer.

Lighting of the Christ Candle
We celebrate our past:

Approval of the Minutes: Janet Ellis made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Bill Craft seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Dora Moore presented a report on February. The beginning balance for February was \$157,838.26 and the monthly income was \$20,357.00. Expenses were \$13,447.85, which resulted in an ending balance of \$164,747.41. Noral Belvin made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented for January and Bill Craft seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Kristin reported the deaths in our community. Lorena Levens February 23rd, E.C. Thornburg on March 8th, Peggy Jones, mother of Cindy Hamlett March 6th, Bertie Hart March 8th, and Lynn Chaplin, daughter-in-law of Virginia Barker on March 8th. The church stocked the vaccine clinic at The Greensboro Coliseum with coffee pods and homemade desserts. This was supported by the funds donated by a church member for the purpose of supporting healthcare workers during this year of Covid. Consistory was asked to do an exercise to imagine what the church will be like when we all can worship together in the sanctuary. What we would see, hear, feel, etc.

Call to Confession
Words of Assurance
We present our offerings
Committee Reports:

BOCE – March 28th Easter Egg hunt on zoom. April 3rd open invitation for sidewalk chalk messages.

Maintenance – Mt. Hope Church Road parking lot was striped today. Dora Moore got the bank to waive the lockbox fee.

Stewardship - Bill Craft reported they did not meet.

Evangelism – They are assisting with the Mobile Meals Ministry, Shepherding Program and WISE Team meeting monthly.

Music & Worship – Meeting monthly
Meals4kids – No report at this time
Greensboro Urban Ministry – will be making delivery.

Blessing Bag Ministry – No report at this time

Social Concerns – No report at this time.

We offer our concerns for the future (New Business)

Community Garden – Cathy Gossett will be representing the consistory on the new community garden committee.

Steeple Leakage – tabled until next month

Outdoor Ministry – Dallas approved to get us on the schedule to do the clearing needed and address the water issue at the swings at the picnic shelter not to exceed \$6,000.00.

Task Force – Janet Ellis reported they met February 16th and agreed to open the church March 1st to small groups. They will meet again on March 16th. This will give more time for people to get vaccinated.

Wise Church – Meeting every 3rd Sunday of the month. They have come up with a mission statement.

Stained Glass Windows from old sanctuary-Dora Moore made a motion to install the old stained glass windows in the balcony and to get the \$460 funds from the building maintenance fund. Lorie Arrington seconded. Motion carried.

5 for 5 offering – One Great hour of sharing this month.

Elizabeth AME Church old cemetery-Ray Mims updated the consistory on the cemetery project. Bill Craft, Bennie Gerner and Ray Mims have located the lot's survey corners and have clearly marked them. He has received bids to

remove the undergrowth and landscaping plans for the roadside.
Bryon Greeson is talking to scouts and parents at Mt. Pleasant UMC about taking on the project of building benches and landscaping in the cemetery.

We have offered to help with their fundraising. We are working with Elizabeth Church for a permanent sign to be purchased and installed at the front of the cemetery and how to best mark the graves. Sharon Mims is researching death records for the unmarked graves. We will continue to plant grass and further maintain the cemetery and hoping for a joint rededication service at the cemetery with members of Elizabeth and Mt. Hope congregations worshipping together.

Third Floor Handling system still work in progress.

Church Credit Card – Noral Belvin made a motion to get a new church credit card with Stacey Martin’s name on it to use on purchases for the church. Cole Levens seconded. Motion carried.

Search Committee – Simon Clark reported they are requesting to look for a youth director rather than an ordained youth pastor. Cathy Gossett made a motion for the search committee to look for a youth director. Bill Craft seconded. Motion carried.

The search committee will continue to look for a candidate.

Kristin closed in prayer.

Charge & Benediction

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Next Consistory Meeting on April 8th at 7pm but revised to April 15th at 7pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Gloria Apple, Secretary



The Women’s Fellowship were able to meet LIVE in April! We had a very short business meeting and then watched the movie *The Secret Life of Bees*. The movie was from the book we studied for the last several months. Thank you Marcia Cham for leading us on this journey. Everyone was seated with social distancing in mind and brought their own snacks to enjoy during the movie.



It is the time to purchase your raffle tickets to benefit **Nazareth Child and Family Connection**. They are celebrating their 115th year of serving children and families in need throughout North Carolina.

Tickets are \$5.00 each. To purchase your ticket, see Linda Miller at church or give her a call. Drawing will be at their Fun Fest on June 5, 2021. You do not have to be present to win. We appreciate everyone’s participation!

- First prize* – 2021 Ford Eco Sport FWD SE or \$10,000
- Second prize* - \$1,000 VISA Card
- Third prize* – 65 qt. RTIC cooler
- Fourth prize* - \$200 gift card to Great Wolf Lodge
- Fifth prize* – Amazon Echo Show

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11th at 6:30 p.m. We would love to have you join us!

Blessings, Dee Greeson



ro Urban Ministry: The wonderful generosity of Mt Hope Church of Christ congregation continues. Your generous food donations to the Greensboro Urban Ministry really adds up through-out the year. This congregation provided food items in

March weighing a total of 152 lbs.

Cemetery Information – Mowing season has begun. Remember to keep the area around the headstone clear of any decorations and to never use glass containers.

Thank you, Cemetery Committee



Ellis/Phipps Scholarship: Attention High School Seniors! Graduating seniors who are members of Mt. Hope and plan to attend college are eligible to apply for the Ellis/Phipps Scholarship. You must be a member of Mt Hope UCC and be a first-time freshmen in a college or university, or a full-time transfer from a community college to a 4 year college or university. To get an application call Dallas Belvin @ 336-601-1982 or pick up application from church office. Fill it out, attach your acceptance letter and return it to Dallas Belvin by June 1st.



Covenant Bible Study

We will begin the “Covenant” Bible Study on Wednesday, May 5 at 6:00 PM, in-person. “Covenant” explores the theme of promises between God and God’s people as a thread that weaves through the scriptures from Genesis to Revelations. The Bible is a conversation partner for life. Reading it recalls and even rewrites our deepest stories, helping us recognize and respond to the true God who saves a suffering, shattered world. “Covenant” is:

1. A small group who pledges to support each other as together each member reads and studies the scriptures. The group’s purpose is to deepen commitment to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.
2. An experience that encourages disciplined daily Bible reading,

prayer and holy conversation. Small group members learn these skills through participant guides, study Bibles, videos and devotional meditations.

3. A promise to cultivate practical wisdom, so that God’s story becomes our story. The result is a “Covenant” relationship with God that will transform our lives and the lives of others.

If you have a desire to grow in faith and have wondered how to learn more about the stories included in the Bible, prayerfully consider joining this “Covenant” Bible Study.

Covenant will meet in the New Fellowship Hall, Wednesday, May 5 at 6:00 pm. If you cannot join in person, you may join us on Zoom. (The Bible Study Zoom link can be found on www.mthopeucc.com; go to the tab “zoom” and click on Connect for the Bible Study Zoom meeting)



Mobile Meals Matching Donation

During the pandemic, Mt. Hope saw a need to feed the hungry. We hope you will join us in this ministry as we continue this weekday mobile ministry delivering hot meals to those in need in our community.

Each gift given during the month of May will be matched dollar for dollar (up to \$4000) by a generous donor.

You can go to www.mthopeucc.com and click on the “Donate” button.

Youth Calendar for May

May 2 @ 6pm- at church under covered pavilion (weather permitting)

May 9 - no youth – Mother’s Day

May 16 @ 6pm - at church under covered pavilion (weather permitting)

May 23 @ 6pm - at church under covered pavilion (weather permitting)

May 30 - no youth - Memorial Day Weekend

bottle of water
yoga blocks if available
a strap or belt
a towel

Suggested donation is \$5 but there is no required charge.

Sonja’s website, Healthfocusstudios.com, has links to her livestream classes on Tuesday’s 6pm and Thursday’s 8am.



Ages 8-13

June 7-11, 2021 8am – 12pm

Mt. Hope UCC

Fellowship Hall

Register @ mthopeucc.com

Contact:

mthipeuccoutreach@gmail.com



Sonja Knowles will be starting a gentle yoga class on May 9th at 3pm weekly on Sunday afternoons at the picnic shelter.

Attendees should bring:
mat

Homecoming and Memorial Day

Since 1924, Homecoming and Memorial Day have been a special day at Mt. Hope. May is the month we normally hold this celebration but unfortunately, we were not able to do so last year. It seems that this May would not be the best time to celebrate as the pandemic is still affecting our lives. We will postpone and combine the 2020 and 2021

Homecoming and Memorial Day until **Sunday, September 19, 2021**. It is our hope that on this day we can safely welcome back family and friends to a homecoming and remember and honor loved ones we have lost in the last two years.

Memorial Association

Memorial Day Facts

Memorial Day is celebrated to honor and remember all of the men and women who died fighting for our country. These men and women dedicated their lives so we can be a free nation.

- Some people get Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day confused. Veteran’s Day is a day to honor all of the men and women who have served in the US armed forces, Memorial Day is to honor those who lost their lives.
- Memorial Day is celebrated every year on the last Monday in May.
- Having a day to honor the soldiers who lost their lives started after the Civil War

(1861-1865). The original name was Decoration Day.

- Decoration Day was started on May 5, 1868 by General John A. Logan commander of the Grand Army of the Republic head of the Organization of Union Veterans to honor union soldiers who died in the Civil War. It was called Decoration Day because family members of fallen soldiers decorated the graves with flowers.
- The first service to honor fallen soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery was held on May 30, 1868. President Ulysses S. Grant was present at the ceremony and General James Garfield gave a speech.
- Decoration Day originally only honored the soldiers who died in the Civil War. After World War I it was changed to all soldiers who lost their lives in war.
- On May 11, 1950 Decoration Day was changed to Memorial Day.
- President Richard Nixon declared Memorial Day a federal holiday in 1971.
- The official flower of Memorial Day are red poppies.
- People celebrate Memorial Day by placing flowers on soldier's graves, fly flags at half-staff and remembering soldiers who lost their lives.



Calendar

Zoom is still an option

Sunday, May 2

10:30 am, Worship – Outside & Mt Hope
Facebook Live

6:00 pm, Youth Meeting - Pavilion

Wednesday, May 5

6:00 pm, Bible Study - Zoom
7:00 pm, Choir Practice

Sunday, May 9 – Mother’s Day

10:30 am, Worship – Outside & Mt Hope
Facebook Live

3:00 pm, Yoga with Sonja - Pavilion

Tuesday, May 11

6:30 pm. Church Women’s Meeting

Wednesday, May 12

6:00 pm, Bible Study

7:00 pm, Choir Practice

Thursday, May 13

7:00 pm, Consistory Meeting

Sunday, May 16

10:30 am, Worship – Outside & Mt Hope
Facebook Live

3:00 pm, Yoga with Sonja - Pavilion

6:00 pm, Youth Meeting - Pavilion

Wednesday, May 19

6:00 pm, Bible Study

7:00 pm, Choir Practice

Thursday, May 20

2:00 pm Music & Worship

Sunday, May 23 -

10:30 am, Worship – Sanctuary

2:00 pm, BCE Meeting

3:00 pm, Yoga with Sonja - Pavilion

6:00 pm, Youth Meeting – Pavilion

Wednesday, May 26

6:00 pm, Bible Study - Zoom

7:30 pm, Choir Practice

Sunday, May 30

10:30 am, Worship – Sanctuary

Monday, May 31 – Memorial Day

24th Peggy Levens

27th John McDade

28th Pattie Greeson



May Anniversaries

5th Dennis and Cindy McGee

6th Cynthia Morris & Thomas Bowles

8th Simon & Brittany Clark

13th Richard & Amanda Freeman

14th Jeremy & Sara Oehling

15th Cole & Shannon Levens

21st John & Melinda McDade

22nd Joe & Cindy Hughes

25th David & Debra Prater

26th Bob & Cindy Hamlett

29th Bill & Elizabeth Craft



May Birthdays

4th Jeff Harris

6th Barbara Greeson

8th Tylor Strouth

9th Cynthia Hyle, Jeffrey Welker

12th Janet Ellis

13th Lorie Arrington

14th Sylvia Belvin, Haywood Levens

17th Ray Neese, Sr., Emma Strouth

19th Doris Walsh

20th Freddie Gossett, Craig Nelson



Prayer Requests

Health Care Center

Alamance Health Care Center	Grady Gerner (#86A)
Alamance Health Care Center	Teresa Oakley (#83)
Alamance House	R. Denny Ingold (#112)
Ashton Place	Blanche Greeson (#802)
Clapp's Nursing Center	Robert Ingold (#807)
Ralph Scott Homes	Betty Kim Settlemyre
Woodhaven (Albermarle)	Annie Lee Apple
Brookdale Burlington	Peggie Coble (#74)
Twin Lakes	Darlene Cherry
Clapp's Assisted Living	Jeanne Ingold (#315)

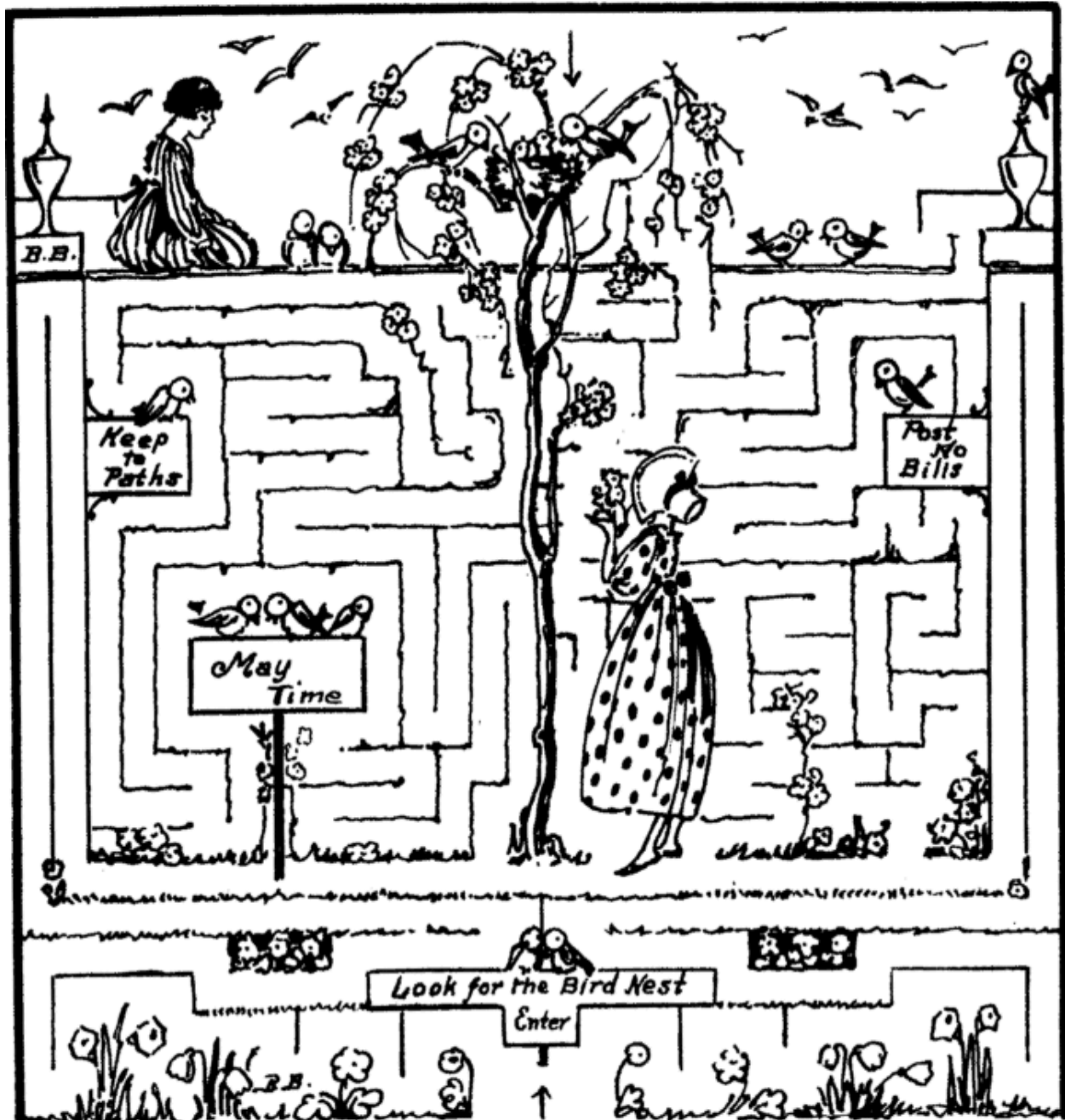
Mt. Hope Military Connections

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

Members/Friends & Relatives

Betty & Richard Kime	Evan
Pat Levens	Shane Swaim
Emma Jean Greeson	Robin Gerner
Jim & Nancy Wimbish	Henrietta McGee – Dennis McGee's stepmother
LuEller Ingold	Alvin Goins
Marianne Reynolds	Sharon Nance
J.R. Shoffner	Darrell Harris
Laurie Baker	Shari Allen
Bob & Dottie Deeter	Vickie & Dale Dangerfield
Jim Gallagher	Terry Staley
Adelita Swaim	Joe & Joan Oliver
Dennis & Cynthia McGee	Brenda & Gary Greeson
Heinz Slayton	Blanche Greeson
Bill & Peggy Welker	Karen Mounce
Mandy & Beezer Levens	Charlie Long
Cole Yedlowski	Family of Lawson Welker
Lloyd & Sylvia Gilliam	William Andrews
Mt. Hope's Mobile Meals Ministry	Phil Lamb
Connie & Dave Blasksley	

MAY - MONTHLY MAZE



GRADUATION SUNDAY – MAY 23, 2021

We will be honoring Mount Hope Church graduates on **May 23, 2021** during the worship service. (Please make plans to attend.) If you are a high school or college graduate this year, please complete the form and give it to Susan Finley along with your (preferably) color photo, or drop it off at the church office. We will need this information by **May 9, 2021** so it can be printed in the bulletin.

If you have any questions please contact Susan Finley at 336-684-6648 or sdf27377@twc.com.

Graduation Sunday, May 23, 2021

Complete Form Deadline – Sunday, May 9, 2021

Please print all information clearly.

Graduate's Full Name: (First, Middle, & Last) _____

Parents' Names: _____

Grandparents' Names: _____

Date of Graduation: _____

Graduated From: _____

Achievements, Awards, etc.:

Plans after Graduation: (college – major, employment, etc.)

Please give this completed form and a graduate photo to Susan Finley or send to the Mt. Hope Church office.