

JANUARY 2023

MT HOPE MESSENGER

MT. HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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



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Whitsett, NC 27377

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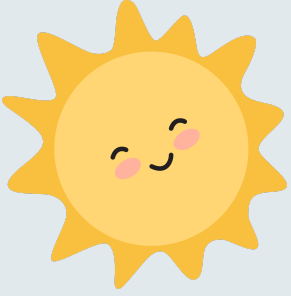
Accompanist - Angelita Berdiales

Consistory President - Dallas Belvin

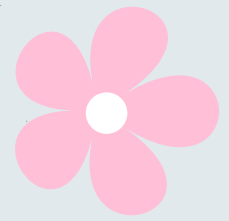
Board of Christian Education -
Susan Finley



Sunday for Worship
at 10:30 am



Pastor's Note



Gently singing Twinkle, twinkle, little star may lull a baby to sleep, but beyond the confines of Earth's atmosphere, the words aren't exactly accurate. A correct, but I will admit, a bit less soothing, rendition might be: Emit, emit, gigantic ball of gas. Stars are huge celestial bodies made mostly of hydrogen and helium that produce light and heat from the churning nuclear forces inside their cores. Astronomers estimate that in our Milky Way galaxy alone, there are about 300 billion.

In our cultural world, saying the word, "star" can drum up all kinds of images; sports superstars, people who became famous for doing something big or small, think the little boy who liked corn in 2022 and was made famous by the song he sung about his favorite food. Stars are balls of light hung in the sky that illuminate the darkness when the sun is shining on another part of the world. In the days following Christmas our Christian liturgy, the rhythm of the church calendar turns our eyes onto the wise travelers who, the scriptures tell us, followed a star to find the baby in Bethlehem. The star may have led them to the place, but it was an epiphany that led them to understand that the babe, lying in a manger was indeed of God.

"Follow the star" is just what the wise travelers did with persistence and faithfulness. Things happen so fast that we can often get pulled in a different direction even while we are following a different path. We are multitaskers at best, confused and distracted at best. In 2023, God is calling for our undivided attention.

Have you been distracted in your faith to follow in the ways of Jesus? Have you forgotten what it was to be baptized, have you put your faith practices and discipline aside? Are you in a funk in your faith? Sunday, January 1st will be "Star Sunday" at Mt. Hope. During worship in the New Fellowship Hall at 10:30 am each person will be handed a star word to follow into the new year. As the wise travelers allowed them selves to be guided by the star, we too will allow ourselves to be guided by a star.

We need you as we come together as a church and follow the star together. Come welcome in the new year of worship with us and renew your dedication to practice your faith, to show up and be ready to "follow the star." Let's be God's stars this year: faithful forces of dedication stirring at our core." I cannot wait to see what epiphanies, "ah-hah moments" God will show us.

Courage for your journey-

Pastor Kristin

WISE MOMENT

New Year's Resolutions and Mental Health

We all want to make positive and impactful changes in our lives, but how can we make the changes last?

Keep them realistic. When setting resolutions, take time to reflect. By making smaller, more achievable steps towards your goals, there is a greater chance that you will keep them.

This applies to all kinds of resolutions, including mental health. You can help manage your mental health symptoms by taking small steps every day.

Use these self-care strategies from the MHFA curriculum to set realistic New Year's resolutions for your mental health.

- **Make time for self-care.** Take time for daily self-care activities that make you happy. This could be daily exercise or simply an outdoor walk or time with loved ones.
- **Be kind to yourself.** Change can be hard and often takes time. Allow yourself to have feelings and forgive yourself for mistakes. You are here and doing your best, and that's what counts.
- **Make sleep a priority.** Sleep and mental health are connected. In fact, approximately 65 to 90% of people with major depression also experience a sleep problem. This year, try to go to sleep a little bit earlier every night and give your body the rest it needs.
- **Limit your screen time.** Spending too much time on your phone or computer can impact your quality of sleep, your relationships and even lead to feelings of depression and anxiety.
- **Learn more about mental health.** One of the best ways to improve your mental health is to understand it. There are online resources available that provide information about common mental health and substance use conditions or you can talk to a medical professional to learn more about your specific situation. NAMI offers a Mental Health First Aid course. MHFA teaches people how to understand, identify and respond to signs and symptoms of common mental health and substance use challenges.
- **Spiritual Care.** Connect with your faith community. Speak with your Pastor. Join a group within the church. Remember you are welcomed, loved and accepted. You belong!

Instead of making sweeping New Year's resolutions to achieve overnight, create a few realistic goals that will have a long-lasting impact on your mental health and happiness. You can #BeTheDifference for yourself.

To Women's Fellowship for January 10 6:30 New Fellowship Hall

Last month I might have left you confused so I sent a packet for you to consider over Advent. On January 10, we'll review some of that material and you'll chose a Star with a Wishful Word for the New Year. The following reading is full of wisdom. How about spending some time contemplating it. Enjoy, Marcia

"The Stages of Work" (Of the Soul)
from The Wisdom of the Enneagram
by Don Riso and Russ Hudson

If we were to really observe ourselves,
we would become aware of our tensions and habits.
If we were to become aware of our tensions and habits,
we would let go and relax.
If we were to let go and relax,
we would be aware of sensations.
If we were to be aware of sensations,
we would receive impressions.
If we were to receive impressions,
we would awaken to the moment.
If we were to awaken to the moment,
we would experience reality.
If we were to experience reality,
we would see that we are not our personality.
If we were to see that we are not our personality,
we could remember ourselves.
If we were to remember ourselves,
we would let go of our fear and attachments.
If we were to let go of our fear and attachments,
we would be touched by God.
If we were touched by God,
we would seek union with God.
If we were to seek union with God,
we'd will what God wills.
If we were to will what God wills,
we would be transformed.
If we were transformed,
the world would be transformed.
If the world were transformed,
all would return to God.

Mt. Hope United Church of Christ

Consistory Minutes

11-10-22 - Final

Members Present: Gloria Apple, Lorie Arrington, Simon Clark, Cole Levens, Dallas Belvin, Janet Ellis, Joe Hughes and Dora Moore.

Pastor Present: Kristin Vaughn

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

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Dallas Belvin had a devotion and time of prayer from Acts 20:28-29, we are being held responsible as overseers to help with God's Flock. Share the word and guiding others. Romans 12:4-5. We all need to work together and give or do as we can.

We Celebrate our Past

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Simon Clark to approve the minutes from October 2022 consistory meeting and Joe Hughes seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

The beginning balance was \$157,065.99 Receipts \$124,327.70, and monthly expenses \$38,806.71. This leaves an ending balance of \$250,769.94. Cole Levens made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report and Janet Ellis seconded. Motion carried.

Brief discussion on reminder in newsletter about tithing when our church services are cancelled due to bad weather or other issues. Discussed insurance renewal rate, have not received at this time.

Pastor's Report

Deaths: Larry May & Louise Jamison (Community member – (Ashes will go in the Memorial Garden at a later date.)

Conducted 5 funerals – 4 not members of the church, people who do not have connections with churches, it is a need in the community.

Advised of all upcoming dates for Advent season and upcoming activities.

Kristin discussed calls that came into the church or to her about the steeple and that they were upset or concerned it was down. One person said they had never been there but it represents the community. What does it mean to people? The church that stands on the hill?

Upcoming thoughts – Where do want kids to hang out? Even as they grow you want home to be a destination that they want to go to. What does it mean to be a destination church? What does

the community need? Such as the playground? Church needs to offer something to the young people, should we have or offer a different service?

Request for speakers In the nursery to be turned on, tv in the nursery to watch live, pastor prefers to keep them in sanctuary and participating. Still needs addressing.

New member's class moved to January.

Committee Reports:

BCE – Nothing at this time Wise – Continuing on working on covenant. AA meetings, Allies for Addiction, & Coat Drive.

Music & Worship – Christmas Caroling – Dec. 11th at 2 pm, Monday, January 9th take down decorations. Poinsettia Fund donations will go to Robin Gerner. Choir goodie bags to shut ins.

Historical – Room has been cleaned out. Need policy for use of the room and the computer.
Communication – still working on updates

WISE – AA meetings continuing on Monday's, Allies for Addiction continuing Monthly. Team is still working on a WISE covenant. Coat collection by Mary Welker still in progress.

Personnel Committee – Met with Angelita and Lorie set goals for future. Still need to meet with Julianna. Sunday, November 13th Congregational Meeting, Consistory to help @ 9:30 am to set up.

Consistory / Staff dinner at Cutting Board December 8th, It has a private room. New members and the personnel committee are also invited.

Things to think about, how we can help with recreated ballfield and Boy Scouts possibly back at the church.

Prayers – pastor covered prayers and asked for any needed.

Old Business

Task Force Update – Always being evaluated Church Signs / maps – signs are up and working on the map Procedure book – still work in progress

Defibrillators – should be arriving in about two weeks Playground signs have been picked up and Jeryl is helping her mount them. AA Meetings will be getting on registry.

New Business:

Gloria Apple Congregational Meeting –
Gloria Consistory Staff Dinner -

Charge and Benediction

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting December 8th, at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lorie Arrington

Secretary

Thank You's

Dear Mt. Hope Family and Friends,

Thank you so much for the Christmas caroling, treats, and cards. It was wonderful to see all the smiling faces. I really enjoyed it.

Thank you again for everything.

Joan May

I wanted to say thank you to everyone who dropped by a card, treat, or gift over Christmas, as well as the generous donations for the staff. It was all so greatly appreciated and makes working here even better! I appreciate all of your thoughtfulness and kind words! Here is to a super 2023!

Lorie Neese Arrington - Admin

The family of Martha Caviness Greeson gratefully acknowledges and thanks you for your kind expression of sympathy. Thank you all for the calls, cards, food, and prayers.

It all means so much.

Steve, Heather, Ben and Luke Greeson

To Our Very Special Mt.Hope Church Family

A long overdue, and Very Big, THANK YOU for all the Love, Prayers, Cards, Emails/Texts, Visits and Carol Sing you all have delivered to both Steve and I.

The cards from individuals, The Sunday School Class, the Gleaning Samaritans, Women's Fellowship, Friends and Neighbors, and The Good Earth Garden Club have been so appreciated. The 3 carloads of Carolers, on our Front Lawn, was beautiful and overwhelming (and the Goody Bag included perfect necessities!)

And a Special Thank You to Pastor Kristin for her calls, hospital visits, and texts to check up on both of us! We can't tell you how much everything, and all of you, brings us smiles as we both deal with the challenges we have.

Moving from Massachusetts, born and bred for both of us, was a very difficult thing for us, in a lot of ways.....but we are closer to 2 of our 3 (blended family) daughters.

I truly believe that we found our home, in this wonderful, caring neighborhood (Aka The Hood) and Mt. Hope Church, by Divine Guidance and a God Wink!

Love & Thank You to Everyone ~ Peg & Steve Burns

From Pastor Appreciation to Christmas, you all really know how to make a pastor feel appreciated. Thank you, for all the ways you have expressed your gratitude and love for me and my family. You have sent cards and made phone calls, prayed for Mike and Jonathan and my parents during their surgeries and sickness. The distress of sickness is lifted when a community of faith holds you up in prayer. To be remembered might just be the best medicine ever!! Thank you for the sweet and thoughtful as well as the funny gifts. All of them are treasured and have a special place in my home, heart, and office. May the New Year bring each of us a time of renewal and strength, a chance for healing and a desire to follow in the ways of Jesus with renewed efforts.

Disaster Assistance Mission

Plans are being finalized for a New Year's mission trip to Ft. Myer, Florida to do cleanup work on homes flooded by October's Hurricane Ian.

We are leaving on Monday morning, January 23rd and returning Saturday January 28th. The trip is being arranged by Inspiritus, a Lutheran disaster assistance agency and Salem Presbytery, a local Presbyterian agency. We will be staying at Anthem Church and meals will be provided by area congregations. Inspiritus will provide all tools and personal protection equipment. Work tasks will be assigned based on the traveler's level of ability.

Cost will be \$50 for a personnel background check and the shared cost of gasoline. Travelers will need to bring twin bed linen and personal warm-weather clothing. (Mt. Hope members, Jim and Cathy Turner whose winter home is near Fort Myers, hope to meet us there.)

Plans will hopefully be finalized by January 15th. If you are available to help with this humanitarian effort, contact Ray Mims, (336) 202-6093 or raymims1@gmail.com.

January Events

1st - Worship 10:30 am in NFH

New Years Day Lunch

4th - Choir practice 7 pm

8th - Worship 10:30 am

- Gather, Learn, & Grow 11:30 am

- No Youth

11th - Choir practice 7 pm

14th - Allies for Addiction 5 pm OFH

15th - Worship 10:30 am

- Gather, Learn, & Grow 11:30 am

- Youth 5 pm

16th - Wise Meeting 5:30 pm NFH

17th - Friends & Neighbors 10:30 am

in the New Fellowship Hall

- Music & Worship meeting 7pm

in the conference room

18th - Choir practice 7 pm

22nd - Worship 10:30 am

- Gather, Learn, & Grow 11:30 am

- Board of Christian Ed. meet 2 pm

25th - Choir practice 7 pm

29th - Worship - 10:30 am

- Gather, Learn, & Grow 11:30 am

- Youth Meeting 5 pm





2nd - David Prater
Marie Linnens
4th - Jimmy Greeson
Peggy Greeson
7th - Pat Branson
Roger Neese
Mikayla Stevens
11th - Lisa Moser
12th - Mary Catherine
Moser
Cathy Turner
13th - Addison Clark
14th - Rebecca Levens
Kayla Oehling
15th - Ida Glover
20th - Kraven Webb
21st - Michael Fittante

22nd - Jim Turner
24th - Lillie Honey
30th - Claire Smith



Anniversaries

Harden & Harriett Phipps
1/20/23
Jeffrey & Janet Welker
1/23/23



Prayer Concerns

Health Care Center

Alamance House ~ R. Denny Ingold (#112)
Clapp's Nursing Center ~ Robert Ingold (#710)
Ralph Scott Homes ~ Betty Kim Settlemyre
Twin Lakes ~ Darlene Cherry (#315)
Brookdale ~ Jerry Greeson (#27)

Mt. Hope Military Connections

Josh Ellis	Grant Harden
Scott Amick	Abigail Thompson
Kyle Gerner	Michael Terraforte

Members, Friends, & Relatives

Pat Levens	Tom Marker	Michael Hughes	Betty & Richard Kime
LuEller Ingold	Allen Cole	Ryan & Megan Marlow	Bill & Peggy Welker
J.R. Shoffner	Clifton Greeson	Maria Woodard Butler	Lloyd & Sylvia Gilliam
Sharon Nance	Celeste Currie Perrell	Nancy Cywinski	Noral & Cindy Belvin
Mandy Levens	Jimmy Greeson	Judy Gerner	Ukraine & Russia
Goldie Sawyer	Anne Bryant	Jack Branson	Jan Shaw Cook
Joan May	Wendy Snyder	Brenda & Tommy Shaw	Tiffany Cauthren
Peggy Greeson	Tyler Stewart	Connie Blakesley's Mom	Family of Tony Warren
Seth Heineman	Adelita Swaim	Karson Winslow	Family of Martha Greeson
Mary Lou Patterson	Betty Greeson	Lou Powers	Family of Margie Kovach
Joe Walker	Sara Shue	Family of Carol Dion	Family of Jane Nelson
Florence Hyle	Steve Burns	Mike Vaughn	Steve & Peggy Burns
Jim Wright	Patricia Brown	Freddie Gossett	Denny Ingold
Nancy Phipps	Winnie	Sandra McCray	Family of Jeanne Ingold
	Janet Ellis		