

the Messenger

The Monthly Newsletter of Myers Memorial United Methodist Church in Gastonia, NC

Upcoming Church Events

- March 7: Drive In Communion Service, 11a
- March 7: Green Things Drop Off, 11a
- March 14: Game Time, 2p
- March 14: Taste of Myers, 4p
- March 14: Church Council, 6p
- March 18: Blood Drive, 3p-8p
- March 21: Talent Show, 6p
- March 28: Palm Sunday; Palm Parade, 11a
- March 28: Easter Egg Hunts, following Palm Sunday Parade
- March 30: Holy Week Reflection, 6p
- March 31: Holy Week Reflection, 2p and 4p

ONGOING

Mondays in Lent: Music Meditations

Tuesdays in Lent: Bible Study, 7p

Wednesdays in Lent: Lenten Lunches, 12:30p

Sundays & Wednesdays: Children, Youth, Sunday School Classes & Bible Studies

Tuesdays: Grief Share & Divorce Care

Wednesdays: Morning Bible Study, Lenten Lunch, Choir Ensembles, Youth Small Group

Thursdays: Soul Purpose

Fridays: Morning Prayer

Cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit

We continue the Lenten season throughout March and into the early part of April. Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for **the coming of Easter. It's a time of self-examination** and reflection. Lent is a time to cultivate in our hearts what God has planted in our lives through the Scriptures. Our 2021 theme for Lent is Cultivate and we are seeking to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5:22-23, *"the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*

Transformation Journey

The Transformation Journey report has been made available and we have held town hall meetings to learn more and discuss. Now it is time to cast our vote to accept this report and if accepted begin our work on the recommendations. The following recommendations have been made for our church: 1) *Clarify our vision, mission and values and align with them.* 2) *Mobilizing, equipping, and empowering lay ministry with church staff through leadership development.* 3) *Stewardship as lifestyle and witness.* 4) *Living into our size.* 5) *Maximizing our gospel witness through worship and communication.* If you still have not seen a full copy of the report, please call the church office and we will mail you one. *We will vote to accept these recommendations on Sunday, March 14 at 6p.* This meeting will take place via zoom and will be the first item on the agenda. Zoom links will be in the weekly eNews and you may use Meeting ID: 813-1356-274 Passcode: 627207. Everyone is invited to attend. All professing members of the Myers Memorial UMC can vote on the Transformation Journey recommendations. Following the Transformation Journey vote, there are other items for Church Council to discuss and you are welcome to stay for that portion of the meeting. *If you are unable to attend the zoom meeting, we invite you to call or email Heather Steffey, our administrative assistant, to cast your vote on Monday. Phone-in or email votes must be received Monday, March 15 between 8:30a-4p. (704-864-3222 or heather@myersmemorialumc.com).* If you have questions, please reach out to Marty Brown, Mike Rhodes, or Pastor Sally.

March Communion

On March 7 at 11am we will celebrate communion in the parking lot behind Bank of America. We will utilize our FM radio broadcast system and you can worship via the comfort of your vehicle—rain or shine! We appreciate your patience as we continue to utilize this new technology. All you need to do is drive in and park in the parking area behind Bank of America (you can be in our lot or theirs). Tune your radio to 87.7FM and set the volume to a comfortable level. Communion elements will be distributed and blessed as we celebrate this gift of grace together! This gathering replaces our usual first Sunday drive thru.

Going Green!

On Sunday, March 7, you are invited to drop off your green things as we cultivate kindness for St. Patrick's Day! **This activity is a Lenten discipline** found in your Lenten booklet and we invite you to drop off the green things the week of Sunday, March 7. The items will then be shared and distributed throughout the community the next week. Be on the look out for green things, it can be **the food/item it's self or just the packaging**. Some ideas: gum, mints, candies, note cards, pens/pencils, pistachios, granola bars, chap sticks. Use your imagination! We would prefer items to be individually packaged for ease of distribution.

Lenten Lunch Series

We continue to gather each Wednesday at 12:30p for our Lenten Lunch Series. Each Wednesday through March 31, you are invited to bring/pick up lunch, drive-in to the church parking lot behind Bank of America, park and tune in to 87.7FM for a brief service of prayer, scripture, meditation and music. We will welcome various clergy from our community each week. Encourage others to join you in the parking spaces as we seek to cultivate our faith.

cultivate THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. Galatians 5:22-23
Sunday Sermon Series

Sundays at 9a

March 7: Kindness

March 14: Generosity

March 21: Faithful

March 28: Self Control

Wednesday Lenten Lunches

Wednesdays at 12:30p

March 3: Rev. David Christy, *Catawba Valley District Superintendent*

March 10: Rev. Fredrick Bowman, *Catawba Valley District Vitality Associate*

March 17: Rev. Sarah Davis, *MMUMC*

March 24: Rev. Dwayne Burks, *Gateway*

March 31: Rev. Chip Hall

Lenten Dates:

Palm Sunday: March 28

Maundy Thursday: April 1

Good Friday: April 2

Easter Sunday: April 4

Music Mondays

Take time each Monday in Lent to reflect on the music of the season. Join Tony Sane, Director of Music, on Facebook and YouTube through March 29 to learn more about the music of the Lenten Season.

#ourmissionistolove

Holy Week 2021

Holy Week is a week of Christian observances leading to Easter Sunday. It begins with Palm Sunday and progresses through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The week culminates with Easter Sunday Celebrations.

Palm Sunday *Sunday, March 28*

Worship at 9a

Palm Parade at 11a

Palm Sunday is a celebration! We'll wave our palms and shout Hosanna! You never know what other characters will join us as we welcome the King of Kings! All ages are invited to participate in a drum circle (drums provided). All of this will conclude with an egg hunt for the children!

Holy Week Prayer & Meditation

March 30, 6p and March 31, 2p & 4p

You are invited to the sanctuary for a time of quiet reflection, prayer and meditation. Guided by thoughts and images on the screens, you can sit and reflect on life during this holiest of weeks. Multiple times will be available and sign ups will take place two weeks prior.

Lenten Lunch Series *March 31, 12:30p*

Join us for our final Lenten Lunchtime Series in the parking lot.

Maundy Thursday Communion *April 1, 5:30p*

We will gather in the CFC parking lot for **The Lord's Supper and a time of reflection to when Christ gathered to share a meal with his friends, helping them to better understand what was to come, Christ's sacrifice for them and for us.**

Maundy Thursday Worship *April 1, 6:30p*

Maundy Thursday Worship will premiere on Facebook and YouTube at 6:30p.

Good Friday Tenebrae *April 2, 6:30p*

Join together for a time of scripture reading and **music as we journey through the last moment's of Christ's life.**

Easter Sunday

April 4

Sunrise Service at 7a

weather permitting in the Pumpkin Patch

Worship at 9a

Communion at 11a in the CFC Parking Lot

2021 Myers Talent Show

It's time to share your talents in the 2021 Myers Talent Show! Do you sing, dance, paint, color, tell jokes? Have you learned a new TikTok dance? We want to see it! Send us your videos or pictures of your talent. We are certain you have uncovered hidden talents in your household during the last year! The Myers Talent Show will premiere on Facebook and YouTube on Sunday, March 21. Our goal for the Myers Talent Show is to raise funds for Gateway, a local agency that connects people with resources to make positive life changes. Please send your videos/images to thmcswain@gmail.com by March 10th. Videos and pictures need to be presented horizontally.

A Taste of Myers

Rev. Sarah Davis, churchoffice@myersmemorialumc.com

Have you recently connected with Myers Memorial UMC - before or during the pandemic? Pastors Sally & Sarah would like to invite you to a special zoom meeting for a Taste of Myers on Sunday, March 14 at 4p. Not only will you have time to ask questions and learn more about the ministry and mission of Myers Memorial UMC, you'll be introduced to a number of current members and enjoy a variety of tasty treats. Please reach out to Pastor Sarah if you would like to participate in this event so we may connect with you!

Save the Date

Church Family Retreat

Saturday, May 1

Tekoa Foothills



Youth Ministry

Tresca McSwain, thmcswain@gmail.com

March Youth Events will be hybrid on Sundays and Wednesdays. Some times it'll be in person (weather permitting) other times we'll connect online.

SUNDAY NIGHT CONNECT

March 7: A Wheely Fun Time Weather permitting, we'll meet at George Poston Park with our bikes (or scooters) at 1pm. Plan B: we'll zoom together at 5:30p.

March 14: Tekoa Foothills Work Day Weather permitting: We'll meet at Tekoa Foothills for an afternoon of service (and Gaga Ball). Dinner will be served at the camp and we should be on the road home by 7p. Families are asked to make their own transportation arrangements for their youth. Plan B: We'll meet we'll zoom together at 5:30p.

March 21: Myers Talent Show will premier at 6p. We hope you will have submitted a video/ images of your talent to Tresca by March 10.

March 28: Palm Sunday EGGstravaganza Plan A is to meet up and get crazy with some eggs! Plan B is to get crazy with some eggs while we connect via zoom.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH

5:15p unless otherwise noted

March 3: Devotions & Check In Youth will lead devotions and conversation.

March 10: Going Green 6p at the Church. Follow up from our Wesley Challenge.

March 17: Devotions & Check In Youth will lead devotions and conversation.

March 24: Prayer Walking Meet at McAdenville South Fork Greenway (501 Lakeview Dr. McAdenville), 6p to 7p. Plan B is online at 5:15p.

March 31: Holy Week Journey with Jesus

Youth Mission Trip

Tresca McSwain, thmcswain@gmail.com

The week of June 27-July 1, we're headed to Hinton Rural Life Center in Haysville, NC. The Myers Youth Mission Trip is for rising 7th graders and older.

Spring Confirmation

Tresca McSwain, thmcswain@gmail.com

This spring we will be offering a Confirmation experience for any youth in 7th grade or older who has not previously been through the Confirmation ministry. Please contact Tresca if your youth is interested in participating or you would like more information.

60+ Fellowship

Connie Elzey, dce@myersmemorialumc.com

Let's do it again! See you on the 3rd Thursday, March 18 at 1p as we zoom into spring! We've got a few opportunities in the works once the weather gets warmer! Meanwhile, zoom is our safest way to connect.

Children's Ministry

Connie Elzey, dce@myersmemorialumc.com

March Children's Sunday School and Music Lesson Packets will be ready for pick up on Sunday, March 7 in the parking lot at 11a during our Communion Service. Sunday School videos will be shared each week on our Children's Facebook page and thru emails. Many thanks to Jerri Lynn and Gary Boggess, Jaclyn Tant, Justine Snyder, Haley and Tony Sane and Melinda Brown for preparing our Sunday School and Music Lessons in March.

Our Faith Word for March is "Remember":

March 7 Jesus Washes Feet ~ John 13:1-17

March 14 The Last Supper ~ Luke 22: 14-20

March 21 Praying in the Garden ~ Luke 22:39-46

March 28 Jesus Enters Jerusalem ~ Matt. 21:1-11

February Blessings at Myers Memorial UMC

While we continue to worship through a digital platform, there are many ways that Myers Memorial UMC continues to be the church in the world. Thank you for sharing your prayers, presence, gifts, talents and witness!

- Ash Wednesday Prayer & Meditations in the Sanctuary
- 60+ Zoom Gathering
- Reverse Chili Bowl
- Ordered caterpillars for an Easter Sunday release
- Wednesday Lenten Lunch Series
- Continued Outdoor Gatherings
- Daily restocking of the Food Pantry in the Patch
- Staff Participating in ongoing Continuing Education
- Making 125 Sandwiches for W. Gastonia Boys & Girls Club
- Friday Morning Prayer Group, 7:15a
- Broadcast Weekly Live Worship simultaneously on YouTube and Facebook
- Delivered Communion and Lenten Packets to Shut Ins
- Praise Band rehearsals
- 20+ Youth & Adults participating in The Wesley Challenge
- Committees meeting on Zoom and in person
- Packing meals for Weekend Backpack Ministry
- Lenten Lunch Series
- Celebrated the lives of Rev. Jesse Bone, Sr., Rev. Chuck Grant, and Bill Drum
- Town Hall Meetings to discuss Transformation Journey
- Began a partnership with a local food truck
- Human Trafficking 101 online session
- Game Time
- Abundant & Faithful Giving
- Shared the Peace of Christ through cards & phone calls
- Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts continue to meet at the Church
- NarAnon and Alanon meet at the church
- GriefShare and DivorceCare meet weekly
- Eagle Scout project underway
- Children gathers in a FB room to for connection & stories
- Lenten Bible Study began
- Valentine Cards from church friends received by our children
- CAM food collections
- Choir Gatherings
- **Women's Bible Study**
- Weekly phone calls and cards
- Parking Lot Communion with FM Transmitter
- Musical Meditations premiered each Monday in Lent
- Gathered for prayer and scripture reading
- Welcomed Amelia Bumgarner to the Myers Staff
- Transitioned bookkeeping practices
- Provided a meal for the Battered Women's Shelter
- Sunday School classes gather in-person & online
- Cared for members with Covid
- Serve as substitute Meals on Wheels Delivery volunteers
- Serve as Crisis Assistance Ministry Volunteers
- Ongoing discussions with meeting the needs of our Homeless Neighbors
- Continue to collect food and supplies for our neighbors with need
- Sending cards to members, visitors, and community members
- Engaged in Worship together through various opportunities to connect.

Myers by the Numbers

As of 2/25/2021	Jan. 24	Jan. 31	Feb. 7	Feb. 14	Feb. 21
Offering	\$9,459	\$18,654	\$38,827	\$11,146	\$8,146
Facebook Engagements (comments, likes, shares)	152	189	140	151	181
Estimated People Reached via Facebook	1,400	1,700	1,600	1,300	1,100
Peak Live Facebook Viewers	75	72	70	75	70
YouTube Views	62	79	87	81	66

Children's Story Time

each Sunday at 1:30p

Until we can meet in person again, let's gather briefly on our "Children at Myers Memorial UMC" Private Facebook page each Sunday @ 1:30p. We'll be able to see each other, meet new and old friends from church, share the highs and lows of our week, enjoy a story and pray for each other and others as we begin a new week!

Easter Egg Hunts

Nurture and Children's Council are working hard to bring the 2021 Easter Egg Hunt to life! We hope you'll join in the Palm Parade on Sunday, March 29 at 11am and stay afterwards for Easter Egg Hunts (divided and spaced among age groups). There will be fun and prizes for all and we can't wait to see you!

Lenten Bible Study

Cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit

You are invited to join in a Lenten Bible Study on Tuesdays at 7p through March 30. Written and facilitated by David Elzey, the study focuses on the many aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit found in just 2 verses of the Bible: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23 CEB)*. Details for connecting via zoom and how to prepare yourself for the session will be shared in the weekly eNews. Please contact the church office (churchoffice@myersmemorialumc.com or 704-864-3222) if you do not receive the weekly eNews and would like to do so.

Easter Treat Bags

The Children's Council and Nurture Committee are working together to host this year's Easter Egg Hunts for elementary and preschool children on March 28. You are invited to assist them by supplying fun treats for the children's Treat Bags. Some ideas for the treat bags: individually wrapped candies, small crosses, butterflies, bouncy balls, pencils, stickers, crayons, small toys, granola bars. Please bring donations to the church no later than March 17th so treat bags can be assembled.

Blood Drive

March 18, 3p to 8p

The Myers Health Cabinet is bringing back the Big Red Bus on March 18 from 3p to 8pm. Appointments are encouraged. Please visit www.oneblood.org/donate-now, search via zip code and date. A link will be posted on our website in March. All donors will receive a cool t-shirt and a \$10 eGift Card. Plus, you will receive a wellness check up including a COVID-19 antibody test, blood pressure, temperature, iron count, pulse and cholesterol screening! All this for free as you give the gift of life!

Easter Lilies

You are invited to adorn the sanctuary with beautiful Lilies on Easter (April 4). The cost will be \$15 per lily. Lilies can be given in honor or in memory of a loved one. Please submit names via email (churchoffice@myersmemorialumc.com) or by snail mail (301 S. New Hope Rd, Gastonia, 28054). Print clearly and include the following information: Names as they are to be printed, designating in honor or in memory of and by whom it is given. Please note the best way to contact you should we have questions. You will be able to pick up your lilies at the 11a Communion Service in the parking lot or after Tuesday, April 6 in the church office. The deadline to order is March 17th.



Game Time

You are invited to an afternoon of fun in games on Sunday, March 14 at 2p. Park in the CFC parking lot and we will utilize the FM transmitter to play games! Thank you to Debbie and Melinda Brown for being the game time hostesses!

Soul Purpose

Soul Purpose is a small group at Myers that meets each Thursday evening for the *soul purpose* of prayer and scripture reading. The group is open to all and meets safely in the narthex at 6:30p on Thursdays. Currently the group is using Ken Gire's devotional, "Moments with the Savior". Questions about the group or the study may be directed to Rev. Everett Stoddard, group facilitator (evstoddard@gmail.com).

Health Cabinet

The Myers Health Cabinet wants to share with you a number of opportunities being offered in our community!

Health-Community Trainings provided by Partners Behavioral Health. This series of on-demand trainings have been developed by Partners Geriatric and Adult Specialty Team. Topics include from caregiver stress and COVID-19; social isolation in the elderly; stress response & self care and more. Visit www.PartnersTraining.org/community-training-catalog to learn more.

NCCare360 is a statewide resource information portal that provides resource connections with housing, employment, food assistance, interpersonal violence, transportation, No Wrong Door (long term care resource) and income support. Simply visit nccare360.org and click "for individuals" to search resources. This program is also associated with the United Way 211 program where you can phone in a request for assistance.

For Lent

Redeeming One,

You came, Jesus, to show me the best way to live and walk this path.

You let yourself feel the depths of need surrounding you.

You kept a purity of focus.

You always, always chose love.

All with bravery and trust.

I need you, Jesus, to walk

beside me now,

helping me reflect,

confess, prepare...

This Lenten path puts before me

the questions and realizations

I so often stuff away.

With each step, I'm recognizing

barriers built through my

rote habits and unrealized prejudices,

my baseline grudges and routine neglects...

I must acknowledge compromises

that drew me further away

from my own soul and your calling.

But, I'm coming back home.

Hone my desires to that

pure focus you held.

Help me fast from self-absorption,

finding my sustenance in the

rich profundity of suffering-love.

Draw my heart and feet forward

on this path that's both total mystery

and innate to who I am in you.

A minor melody marks our cadence,

yet you tune my ears for more than that.

Resurrection is always the final number.

Help me walk, Savior Lord,

with hope amid heaviness,

ears to the ground.

I will welcome my mortality

and the potential in ashes and dust.

Amen.

arianne braithwait lehn

Ash & Starlight: Prayers for the Chaos & Grace of Daily Life

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