

Myers Memorial
United Methodist Church

the Messenger

Quarterly Newsletter of Myers Memorial United Methodist Church in Gastonia, NC

WE ARE A LIGHTHOUSE CONGREGATION

Recently, The Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church began organizing resources for individuals whose churches have closed or disaffiliated yet individuals wish to remain United Methodist. One of these resources is identifying "Lighthouse Congregations" within the conference.

The laity (church members) of Myers Memorial UMC brought this information to the February Church Council Meeting, several laity participated in a zoom information session and then presented a resolution to the called Church Council Meeting on March 12. The members of the Church Council (made up of committee leadership) affirmed the resolution for Myers Memorial UMC to be designated as a Lighthouse Congregation.



What does this mean? In a nutshell, it means we will be what Myers has always been ~ a Christ-centered community that welcomes, loves, and serves one another and the world! We will continue to do what we do so well, and be sensitive to why people may be visiting

or attending; loving and caring for them as they navigate the rocky times of losing their church home. You can read more about Lighthouse Congregations at www.wnccumc.org or www.MyersMemorialUMC.org/lighthouse.

We know you are anxious to learn more about how you can help us live into being a Lighthouse Congregation. David Elzey & Laurie Knight are spearheading this initiative and will be sharing more information as well as offering training opportunities in the coming months. A few important things that are currently in the works:

continued on page 4

OUR MISSION

The Mission of Myers Memorial United Methodist Church is to cultivate a Christ-centered community that welcomes, loves, and serves one another & the world.

Cultivating

A CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY Worship on Sundays at 9a and 11a

*On-site and Live-Stream
via Facebook, YouTube & Church Website*

- May 6: Soul Sneakers, 9a, Greenway
- May 7: Communion
10a Taste of Myers, Parlor
12p Mitey Companions, Jackson's
- May 10: Trinity Memories Café, CFC
- May 12: Teacher Appreciation Lunch, Grier
- May 14: *No Sunday Afternoon Programming*
9a Children Sing in Worship
- May 18: 60+ Fellowship, Meet at Church, 11a
- May 20: Mission Possible Build
- May 21: Graduation Sunday, New Members
12p Memories Café Luncheon, CFC
- May 28 Pentecost
- May 29: Church Office Closed
- June 3: Soul Sneakers, 9a
- June 4: Communion
12p UWF Luncheon, CFC
5p Youth Summer Schedule begins
- June 10: Young Adults, CLT FC Tailgate
- June 11: 10a Taste of the Holy Land, CFC
12p Mitey Companions, Jackson's
- June 14: Trinity Memories Café, 11a, CFC
- June 15: 60+ Fellowship, Ray Nathan's, 11:30a
- June 15-18: WNC Annual Conf., Lake Junaluska
- June 18: *No Sunday Afternoon Programming*
- June 26-29: Mission Mania
- July 1: Soul Sneakers, 9a
- July 2: Communion
- July 4: Church Office Closed
- July 9: Mitey Companions, Jackson's, 12p
- July 12: Trinity Memories Café, 11a, CFC
- July 16-18: Vacation Bible School
- July 20: 60+ Fellowship, Peach Cobbler Factory, 2p
- July 21-28: Youth 2023 Trip
- August 6: Christian Education Sunday
9a & 11a Blessing of the Backpacks
3:35p Honey Hunters Game

OUR VISION



Together God's life grows in us, so that we can share that life with others.

SUMMER SERMON SERIES:

ISRAEL: A SUMMER PILGRIMAGE

From the comfort of wherever you worship, we're taking another trip to Israel this summer! Each Sunday in June and July we'll visit a destination in Israel. From Beth Shean to Capernaum, Caesarea Philippi to the Shepherd's Fields, we'll make stops along the way to discover sacred locations for God's people. Highlights on our Pilgrimage: Beth Shean, Magdala, Mt. of Beatitudes, Capernaum, Caesarea Philippi, Sepphoris, Ein-Gev, Masada and the Shepherd's Field. Join us on this summer pilgrimage where no passport is needed! Myers Memorial UMC worships onsite and online each Sunday at 9a and 11a and you can visit our website to catch up or revisit a location. Please invite someone to join you on this journey!



WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP

Are you looking for a small group of women who are living a life of imperfection? Do you find yourself saying: "I'm too busy for that", "I'll do that later", "That can wait, I went to church on Sunday, isn't that enough?" We all do! This low pressure group will use Kate Bowler's book Good Enough to support each other to "strive for what is possible today, while recognize the life in front of us can be beautiful". Sessions will stand alone so don't feel as if you have to commit long term...just one day is good enough. If this sounds interesting to you, please gather in the choir room on Sunday, May 21 at 6:30pm with Laura Beatty. When we gather we'll talk about logistics such as when and where we'll meet. If you have questions or are interested, please contact Laura Beatty (music@myersmemorialumc.com) or Connie Elzey (dce@myersmemorialUMC.com).

MUSIC NOTES

The Chancel Choir rehearses each Wednesday evening at 7pm in the Choir Room. If you are gifted with a singing voice and would want to sing at the 11a Sunday Services, join us! We'll be practicing through June, taking a break in July. A Women's Ensemble will sing in worship on July 30th and a Men's Ensemble on August 6th. If you are interested in learning the anthem for those respective 11a services, meet in the Choir Room on Wednesday, June 28th, Women at 7p and Men at 7:30p. The full Chancel Choir will resume with weekly Wednesday practices on August 2nd at 7p.

MENTOS FROM THE HOLY LAND

On Sunday, June 11th from 10a to 10:40a, you are invited to join the Holy Land pilgrims in the CFC for a time of sharing! Taste the foods, see the pictures, and ask your questions because those who traveled to Israel in the Spring are excited to share with you!!

BOTH/AND

Post-pandemic worship is now a Both/And concept. We now have 3 groups of worshippers at Myers: worshippers that gather BOTH in-person in the sanctuary AND online, either at a designated worship time or tuning in after Sunday mornings. For the last 5 months, Pastor Sarah and Glenn Fried have participated in an online cohort to help Myers faithfully improve the quality and practice of hybrid worship. You may have already noticed a change in how worship leadership are intentional on Sunday mornings of introducing themselves. That's not only for those in the sanctuary who are may be new, but also for those online who may just be joining in. On average we have 15-20 people online with us during worship on Sunday mornings and hundreds of views in the days after. As we continue to reflect how to best engage with one another, building a Christ-centered community, you will continue to see small changes and more opportunities. We also want to build community between all who worship here. If you're interested in learning more, we'd love to tell you about it! In all this, we know that we will engage more people and connect them to God and to one another. Our ultimate goal in this process is to create participants in faith, not just viewers of worship.

SAVE THE DATE ~ AUGUST 6

It's Time to Play Ball! Mark your calendars for the first pitch of the Honey Hunter's game on August 6p at 3:35p. We're getting group tickets and the youth are encouraging the entire church to go to do something fun together!

SOUL SNEAKERS

Lace up your shoes and let's get moving! The Myers Health Cabinet is excited to offer you this opportunity to walk together! The goal is fitness and fellowship on the first Saturday of each month at 9am and the locations will vary. The first 'hike' will be May 6 at 9a along the Avon/Catawba Creeks Greenway located near Lineberger Park (the parking area is on Fern Forest Dr, across Garrison from the Park). This group is open to all ages! If you are interested, please contact Allison Evanoff (evanoff.allison@gmail.com). Allison will contact you with any last minute details and let you know where the next month's hike will be located!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY NIGHT WONDER

The Children's Wonder Group will conclude on Sunday, May 7th with a final gathering from 5:30-6:30p on the 3rd Floor. Children will sing in worship on Sunday, May 14 at the 9a service. Mark your calendar for August 20th when we will gather again for weekly opportunities to wonder about God through music, the Bible and other hands on experiences!

SUMMER TIME GIVING REMINDER

Tithing is an act of worshiping God. Like prayer and singing, tithing shows God our appreciation and is an expression of God's generosity towards us. As we make plans for summer vacations and possibly more weekends out of town, it's important we remember our commitments to support our church & community. If you've got summer adventures planned, you are invited to set up your automatic giving, or pack a stamped envelope to mail your financial gift to the church. You may give securely at www.MyersMemorialUMC.org/give; contact your financial institution to set up reoccurring contributions or mail a check to the church at 301 S. New Hope Rd, Gastonia, NC 28054.

YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP

A Group of Young Adults at Myers are planning some meet ups over the Summer! Young Adults (18-35 year olds) are planning to tailgate prior to the June 10th CLT FC Game vs. The Seattle Sounders. And on August 10th it's River Jam at the WWC with YamYam on the stage! Text Victoria Flake (980-285-0667) and she'll make sure you know what you need to know!

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our Sunday School Leaders are dedicated and there are opportunities for all ages!! Sometimes the adult members shift classes over the summer so they can fellowship and see what other classes are studying, so you're welcome to try out a different class each week!

Children: Gather at 10a in room E103 to check in with each other then head to their classes. Parents can pick up in this room at 10:40a. This summer we're studying Peter & Pentecost, the Good Shepherd & the Big Fish, an Ark & Lions and we'll meet Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego!

Youth: Meet each Sunday on the first floor, Middle School in the Youth Classroom and High Schoolers in the Youth Lounge.

Adults:

- *Open Minds Class* meets in Room E104 with the opportunity to join over Zoom. Topics vary each week as they use the "Wired Word" which helps us discuss what the Bible says about what we encounter in life.
- *New Life Class* meets in Room E02 on the first floor and are currently using Adam Hamilton's "Forgiveness: Finding Peace Through Letting Go" study.
- *Contemporary Class* meets in Room E106 and using a study by Amy Jill Levine.
- *Asbury Class* meets in Room CFC106 and is using a couple different James Moore books for the summer.

MORE OFFERINGS FOR ADULTS

You are invited to join any of these Study groups at any time! Contact Connie Elzey, Director of Christian Education, if you have questions, need help finding the right group for you or if you feel led to facilitate a small group study. 704-864-3222, dce@myersmemorialumc.com.

Sunday Evenings | 5:30-6:30p | Fast Track Disciple 2: Luke & Acts in the Asbury Room

Thursday Soul Purpose | 6:30p-7:30p | Romans by Mickey Efird, then *Questions Jesus Asked* by Magrey deVega.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH | JUNE 4

The women of our church and community are invited to the next quarterly gathering of United Women in Faith. On Sunday, June 4th at 12p (immediately following 11a worship) in the CFC, we'll enjoy a summer lunch of hamburgers and hotdogs and welcome a special guest! Deaconess Renee Hayes, a Faith and Community worker in Trinity, NC will share about her call to ministry and how God is using her. A deaconess is a laywoman (and different than a Deacon like Pastor Sarah) who is called by God to be in lifetime relationships with The UMC for engagement with a full-time vocation in ministries of love, justice and service. Please make time for this time together. Questions? Contact Tanya Lunsford at 704-678-7122.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Myers Memorial UMC is home to a number of support groups. If you or if you know of someone that could benefit from these support group, please reach out to the church office (704-864-3222) and we will ensure you are connected with the leadership of the group.

- *Naranon*, Mondays, Zoom
- *Grief Share*, Tuesdays, 10a, Parlor
- *DivorceCare*, Tuesdays, 6:30p, Zoom
** *New Session begins May 16* **
- *Alanon*, Tuesdays, 11a, Asbury Class
- *NA*, Thursdays, 7p, Youth Lounge
- *Mitey Companions*, 12p, 2nd Sundays, Jackson's Cafeteria ** *May gathering will be 5/7* **
- *Alzheimer's Caregiver Support*, 2nd Tuesdays, 4p, Asbury Class

continued from page 1...

securing and utilizing curriculum that falls under a Wesleyan umbrella in all of our classes and small groups; offering hospitality training; as well as creating a covenant for all facilitators and leaders of our church just to name a few. Please continue to read your weekly e-news as there you will find any updated information as it becomes available.

Laurie Knight: lknight0920@gmail.com

David Elzey: dcelzey@att.net

www.MyersMemorialUMC.org/lighthouse

SUPPORT TRINITY MEMORIES CAFÉ | MAY 21

On May 21st at 12p you're invited to a benefit lunch to support the Trinity Memories Café ministry. Each month the CFC becomes a Café to welcome caregivers and their loved one with memory issues. The CFC is filled with music, joyful noises and appreciation. Now is your chance to experience this amazing ministry as the team seeks to re-create the climate of the TMC. Come for lunch, stay for the entertainment with special guest John Ahrens (WSOC-TV Weatherman) and contribute financially as you are able. The Memories Café serving team is preparing Salisbury steak, rice, green beans, salad and dessert! Tickets for lunch will be on sale in the Narthex on May 7 & 14.

ONGOING WAYS TO SERVE

Trinity Giving Tree stands in the Narthex as a giving point for donations to serve one another and the world. Each month the Trinity Tree will highlight a different ministry and an opportunity for you to contribute as we seek to welcome, love and serve one another and the world!

May: Pantry in the Patch

June: Supporting Myers Youth

July: Crisis Assistance Ministries

August: School Supplies

First Sundays for CAM The New Life Sunday School class invites you to participate in a collection for Crisis Assistance Ministry. Simply leave your donations at the rear of your vehicle on the first Sunday of each month and a member of the New Life Sunday School class will stop by to pick up your donations.

Thirsty Third Sundays The Choir is spearheading a collection on the Third Sunday of each month for Cancer Services of Gaston County. You are invited to **bring donations of Gatorade and Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soups** Please leave your donations in the basket at the front of the Sanctuary nearest the choir loft.

Mission Possible meets as needed to construct and assemble ramps at homes in the community. No construction skills necessary! The next build is Saturday, May 20th.

*Want to serve? Call the church office
and we'll get you connected! 704-864-3222*

MYERS MEMORIAL UMC 60+

This group is designed for all those 60 years and older to meet for fellowship, sometimes food and always an adventure on the third Thursday of each month. Mark your calendars and invite a friend!

- Thursday, May 18, 11a Meet at the church to carpool to Bush-N-Vine in York, SC for lunch and ice cream.
- Thursday, June 15, 11:30a, Meet at Ray Nathan's BBQ (4571 S. New Hope Rd) for lunch and fellowship.
- Thursday, July 20, 2p, Meet at The Peach Cobbler Factory (2524 E. Franklin Blvd, behind Walgreens) for a delicious summer afternoon treat!

MISSION MANIA 2023 | JUNE 26-29

Designed specifically for our rising 4th-9th graders, Mission Mania is a 4-day excursion into our community to love and serve others! Gather at the church each morning at 9a for daily trips out into our community to love and serve others! Most projects will be completed **in the morning and we'll still have time for lunch and a bit of fun** before returning to the church by 1p! The cost will be \$50 and will cover all materials and entertainment costs. Registration forms and specific details will be mailed in early May but mark your calendar now and invite a friend! Contact Andrew Ingram, Director of Children & Youth Ministries Andrew@MyersMemorialUMC.com.

YOUTH ARE OUT TO DINNER WITH ANDREW!

Myers Youth and Friends are invited to join Andrew for dinner from 6p to 7p on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays in May and June. Bring money for dinner or you are **welcome to just come hang out! Don't let Andrew eat alone!**

May 3 & June 7: Chick-fil-a (Cox Rd)

May 17 & June 21: Odoba in Gaston Mall (Cox Rd.)

CALLING ALL HEROES! | VBS | JULY 16-18

So, let's strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other! Romans 14:19

Calling all heroes to the Hero Hotline Headquarters **where everyone's gifts are valued and every hero has a role to play!** Each day from 6:30p to 8p at our 2023 VBS, superheroes of all ages and abilities will spring into action and explore the ultimate Hero Handbook, The Bible! **They'll follow examples set by a cast of supporting Bible Heroes in stories from the OT & NT, who work together to bring peace and build each other up!** It's going to take a lot of modern day heroes to make VBS a wonderful **place for all God's Children!** **Begin praying about how you can use your gifts and mark your calendar for July 16-18 from 6:30p to 8p!** **We're looking for** Decorators, Hero Guides to lead the elementary heroes; station leaders for snacks, science, crafts, storytelling and recreation! **We'll need Preschool Hero Leaders and a clean up crew as well!** Contact Connie Elzey or Andrew Ingram for more information on how you can be a hero this summer! Registration will open in June.

SUNDAY FUNDAYS FOR 3RD-5TH GRADERS

Sunday, May 21 | 1:30-3p

Dress for an active afternoon! We'll meet up at the Pelican's Parking Lot at Martha Rivers Park for an afternoon of fun and games! Parents, we'll return to Pelican's for pick up at 3p.

Sunday, June 11 | 12p to 2:30p

Meet in the Youth Lounge for a quick lunch then we'll hop on the bus and head to the Schiele Museum for an afternoon of exploring God's great world!

CELEBRATING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

One of the great values held at Myers Memorial UMC is our Christian Education ministry—cultivating a **Christ-centered community for all ages!** **On August 6th we're celebrating BIG!** We'll **recommit ourselves to participating in educational opportunities and celebrate our Sunday School teachers and small group leaders, all who are instrumental in our decades long commitment to growing deeper as disciples of Jesus Christ.** Sunday Worship will also include Blessing of the Backpacks & Devices as pray for all students, administration, teachers and staff as our schools go back into session!

FIND IT ON OUR WEBSITE
www.MyersMemorialUMC.org

/Give /Youth /Children /Worship
/Lighthouse /TheBibleYear /Serve /Calendar
/TMC /TheStainedGlassWindows

SUMMER SUNDAY YOUTH MINISTRY

For all the latest details please make sure you're receiving the monthly Youth email! You can also find details in weekly church eNews and on the Youth webpage, www.MyersMemorialUMC.org/youth. Be prepared! It's Summertime so we're going to change some things around from time to time!

No Youth On Sunday May 14, 28, or June 18

Unless otherwise noted, a quick meal will be served at the beginning of our gatherings. Please consider hosting a meal one Sunday. Visit the Youth Page to check availability.

Sunday, May 7 | 5:15-6:30p

You are More Than...God sees the potential in each of us...not to ace tests or be perfect, but to be a disciple who transforms the world.

Sunday, May 21 | 5:15-6:30p

Splash into Summer! Wear a bathing suit and bring a towel, we're getting wet!! You might need a change of clothes for the ride home.

Sunday, June 4 | NEW TIME | 5p to 6:30p

Summer Style Youth Group! We're doing some updating in the Youth Lounge and we're adding some great things to our Sunday Nights so we've got to add some time! Join us for dinner at 5p followed by activities, music, games, devotions and small group discussions.

Sunday, June 11 | 5p-6:30p

First Responders Service Project. Nothing can truly say "thanks" enough but we're going to try and show our appreciation! Bring individually wrapped, hopefully homemade and nut-free treats such as brownies, cookies, protein snacks.

YOUTH 2023: BOLD—BEING OURSELVES. LIVING DIFFERENT.

This year our High School Youth are off on a grand adventure July 23-28. These Youth and Adults are headed to Florida for a week of service, discipleship and fun: Rhett Buchanan, Xavier Lyon, Zane Dodd, Brock Davis, Elijah Simpson, Adam Anderson, Ella Queen, Mattie Queen, Charlotte Hearne, Eva Kline, Raegan Lilja, and adults Brooke & Kevin Cook, Lynda Sides, Pastor Sally Queen and Andrew Ingram. This group will start the week at a helping ministry in the Orlando area where they will put their faith into action. Then they're headed to Daytona Beach for Youth 2023, the national gathering for United Methodist Youth in the United States. Youth 2023 is a chance for these youth and adults to experience cutting-edge speakers, amazing artists, and broaden their understanding of what they and their church are capable of! We invite your prayers as they prepare and travel. Coming in June are additional opportunities to support this team.

Sunday, June 25 | 5p-6:30p

One Size Fits All! Got big problems? Do your problems feel tiny compared to others? Your God loves and cares about each of us!

Sunday July 2 | 12p - 3p

Kayaking Fun Day! Meet and pick up at the Tailrace Marina (1010 Marina Drive, Mt. Holly) Cost is \$30/person. Wear clothes and shoes that can get wet, bring a towel and a change of clothes.

Sunday July 9 | 5p-6:30p

I Am Who I Am! Jesus made a long list of "I Am" statements. Who do you say he is?

July 16-18 | 6:30-8p | Vacation Bible School

Called Together to Serve God! 6th-12th graders will meet downstairs each night for a hero-tastic time! Hero attire is encouraged. Pre-registration coming in May!

Sunday July 23 | 5p-6:30p

Game On! How many games can you play in 90 minutes? Meet & Pick up at Adventure Landing (2600 E. Franklin Blvd). Tokens will be provided to get you started, bring money for more!

Sunday July 30 | 5p-6:30p

Mele Kalikimaka! Let's Celebrate Christmas in July, Hawaiian Style! Come dressed to party, eat and celebrate the reason for all season ~ Jesus!

SAVE THESE DATES

Honey Hunters Game | August 6 | First Pitch 3:35p

Back to School Family Night August 20 | 5:30p

Middle School Mission Trip | November 10-12

UMYF Benediction *The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen. (Numbers 6:24-26)*

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

On Sunday, May 21 we will recognize our known High School and College Graduates during the 11a worship service. We hope you will join us in celebrating their achievements!

Known High School Gradates

Matthew Carper, Piedmont Community Charter School

Marie Kalinoski, Forestview High School

Mallory Wolfe, Forestview High School

Known Advanced Degree Gradates

Victoria Flake, UNCC; Special Education & Elementary Education

Duda Franca, Western Carolina Univ.; Marketing

Amelia Hoskins, Queens Univ.; Nursing

Ashley Lowry, UNC-Greensboro; Music
CP McGuire, Western Carolina Univ.; Commercial Music & Audio Production
Jillian Medlin, Liberty Univ.; Strategic Communications
Clay Pettit, UNC-Wilmington; MBA-Business Analytics
Thais Pettit, Belmont Abbey; Educational Studies
Walker Roper, Garner Webb University; Business
Kathleen Sharp, Gaston College
Kimberly Shellman, Univ. of Wisconsin; MS, Sustainability Management
Caroline Shoemaker, ASU; Construction Management
Lauren Snyder, Univ. of Kentucky; Digital Media Design, Minor: Creative Writing
Elliott Stines, UNCC; Computer Science

God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8

In this verse, Paul is offering God's economic plan. God's work is made possible through the generosity of those God blesses. **During 2022, I witnessed God's economic plan at work at Myers Memorial UMC.** Our congregation was faithful to continue ministry throughout Covid. We did not cancel one single tradition at this church and we found new ways to meet the needs of our neighbors. We were faithful. Our community noticed our faithfulness and wanted to partner with us. We received several financial gifts in addition to your continued financial generosity.



Pastor Sally

- We received a \$150,000 grant from an anonymous foundation that wanted to help us “spruce-up” our exterior campus. We were able to paint the exterior of the sanctuary, purchase two electronic signs, landscape the bank area outside the sanctuary and do some additional paving of the parking lot.
- We received a \$25,000 grant from the First Gaston Foundation in memory of Jim Windham. This generous gift was completely unexpected. We are most grateful that the First Gaston Foundation wanted to bless our church as they remembered Jim. This gift has not yet been spent and the trustees and finance committees will discern the best way to use this money to remember Jim's faithful service to our church.
- The merger with Trinity UMC brought us additional financial resources as we sold their property. Some of this money has already been used to address current needed capital improvements and additional money has been invested for the future capital needs of Myers Memorial UMC.
- We received a \$75,000 Employee Retention Tax Credit that acknowledged our employees continued work throughout Covid. This money came right at the end of 2022. Between this tax credit and your faithfulness in giving to our budget, we finished 2022 with a large surplus, allowing us to pay our 2023 apportionments in January, thus relieving our 2023 budget of that expense and fulfilling our connectional commitment for the year. Additionally, we placed \$9,500 in a designated account to be used to bless our community through mission work in 2023.

I firmly believe that these gifts were evidence of our faithfulness to God. God provides in abundance. And we are abundantly blessed. **That is how God's economy works...always in abundance.** The challenge for us is to continue to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us, so that we can continue to bless others as God has blessed us.



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