

Pastor's Message

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times for refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you, even Jesus. Acts 3: 19-20

In the last days of January there was a message on the national and local news saying basically the same message: Winter and ice storms are on the way and dangerous and/or hazardous events may occur as a result of it.

They repeated that message over and over again, and the people in the different states, counties and communities responded properly to the message preparing themselves to be ready to receive the inclement weather in the best ways possible. Many people took extreme measures, yet some others left their preparations to the very last minute, and yet some others simply trusted that nothing will come to their communities so they didn't prepare at all.

Fortunately, the consequences of those events were not as expected, and the damage to the power lines and water systems and traffic accidents were not as bad as anticipated. Yet, most of the people responded to the message staying at home, not driving unless was necessary, and having the supplies that could be needed at home in case of an emergency.

When an important message such as the possibility of natural disasters and other important events may occur, then the people take note responding in the appropriate ways to overcome those difficult moments. They follow the instructions of the message, and the proper response is vital for the wellbeing of themselves, and the community at large.

In our spiritual lives there is a permanent warning message as well. A message that has been proclaimed throughout many centuries by important leaders concerned for the spiritual wellbeing of the people in the world. A message that has been proclaimed by people such as Moses, David, Jonah, Ezekiel, Joel, John the Baptist, Peter or Paul, and the message has been basically the same, and that is: Repent and turn to God, so that your sins might be wiped out, the times for refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ.

Maybe because this message has been proclaimed for so long, many people today are not considering responding to it in the proper way following the invitation, yet the message is as relevant today as it was from the beginning.

We believers have responded to the message. I have heard many believers saying: I am ready! And that is great! Yet, the number of those ignoring or rejecting the message keeps growing in our times. The Lord invites us, as believers, to keep sharing this message, which is a message made in love and it is full of grace from God. Paul said: Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap the harvest if we don't give up. Is this hard? Yes, it may seem our message falls into deaf ears, yet, this is our task as Christians, to share the gospel in all the ways we can, to all the people we can, in all places we can as long as ever we can. God bless you for sharing the gospel where you are.



With love,
Pastor Hugo.



Our Special Members

Mollie McAllister

The Post at Wesley Chapel
2427 Manor Store Way
Indian Trail, NC 28077
704-628-5414
Birthday—March 14th

Joyce Parr

4207 Deerfield Dr.
Monroe, NC 28112
704-764-3174
Birthday—Dec. 18th

Bill & Loretta Ponder

4510 Rollingwood Ln.
Monroe, NC 28112
704-764-7104
Birthday—Jan. 29th

Carolyn Porter

6211 Potter Rd. S.
Waxhaw, NC 28173
704-681-4858
Birthday—Sept. 9th

Betty Ann Starnes

3116 Parkwood Sch Rd.
Monroe, NC 28112
704-764-3736
Birthday—Jan. 10th ***

Circle Meetings

Helping Hands: Mon. 2/09
at 6:30pm

Witness & Service: Tues.
2/10 at 10 am

Busy Bees: Thurs. 2/12 at
9:30 am

United Methodist Men
Not meeting until March

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH



United
Women
in Faith

After watching or listening to the news, are you left feeling discouraged, angry, worried or even anxious about what is going on in our community and in the world? I invite you to join me for a Bible Study, "Practicing Hope Together." LaDonna Butts will be leading this Uwharrie District Mission U event in Asheboro at St. Luke's on February 21st. It is an all day event, so please let me know if you would like to join me so we can get registered.

January certainly has been an eventful month, weather-wise anyway. One week we are enjoying 70 degree weather and then we get slammed with an ice storm followed by snow the next weekend! We are thankful to the Helping Hands Circle for taking responsibility for the flowers in the sanctuary and for the bag lunches for Operation Reachout in January. Witness and Service will have those responsibilities in February followed by the Busy Bees in March.

Be sure to mark your calendar for April 12th for our next unit meeting. We will have a special speaker! While you are at it...mark April 11th for the Uwharrie District Prayer Breakfast in New Londo. We will be remembering our three dear sisters in Christ: Hattie Starnes, Kathy Moss and Martha Allen.



Serving in Christ,
Cindy Carter 423-612-1421
Bethlehem United Women In Faith President
Uwharrie Dist. Board Spiritual Growth Coordinator

This is a memorial tribute to Reece Starnes. The man loved Bethlehem United Methodist Church and its people! He spent his entire 95 years worshiping and serving there.

Thanks so much from Carolyn and the family for the love and kindness shown to us during his death.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Starnes



Happy 2026! Can you believe we're already into a New Year? Your church and church staff are hard at work to establish great plans for growth in 2026. Remember, a new budget, new ideas and your support plays a vital role in enhancing our ministry outreach. We need to improve on offering new opportunities to our youth and community outreach.

Sometimes, as we go through the wintry weather and/or miss the church services, take a moment to remember your tithe to the church. It is easy to support your church through online giving at the website: bethlehemchurchonline.org. Just click "donate" in the upper right hand corner on the opening screen. The general fund has the greatest need to support the daily operations of the church, but you can also make donations to other funds such as building, backpack or pastor's discretionary fund. Please send a note to dolly@bethlehemchurchonline.org if your donations to one or these funds is in honor of or in memory of someone.



Thanks for your continued support,
Karen Totaro
Finance Chair

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

MEMORIALS:

BUILDING FUND:

Martha Allen by **Ajean Broome**
" " by **Judy Starnes**

BACKPACK FUND:

Martha Allen by **David & Jenny Gay**
" " by **Roger & Margaret Hill**
Reece Starnes by **Phil & Debbie Belk**

PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUND:

Martha Allen by **Kathy Starnes**
Claude Broome by " "

HONORARIUMS:

BUILDING FUND:

Betty Ann Starnes by **Julia & Eric Tsitouris**
" " " by **Tim & Kim Walkup**
Judy Starnes by **Mary Anne McWhorter**

BACKPACK MINISTRY:

Betty Ann Starnes by **Roger & Margaret Hill**
Joyce Parr by **Cindy Carter**

Dear Bethlehem;

Thank you so very much for entrusting the Blessing Cart to use the Arbor to serve our community! Thank you for your generosity and hospitality and most of all believing in this ministry.

We are truly grateful for your partnership and we want to be good stewards of this beautiful space you have entrusted us to use.

As a small way of saying thank you, we would love to contribute toward the power bill.

Thank you for all of your support, kindness and prayers. We look forward to seeing what the Lord will do in 2026!

*Many Blessings to you all,
Tina McLemore—The Blessing Cart*

Need Easter Egg candy donations dropped off by March 7th –box at Kim's office.

Best Years Group will meet on February 18th @ 11am. Ladies bring desserts. Carolyn Starnes needs to know if you're coming!

Children's Ministry

I'm writing this month's newsletter on January 25th. The day Union County turned into one big piece of ice! Our science theme for January was meteorology and how God uses and controls the weather. It was hard not to be nervous about this ice storm. Loosing power, trees falling, roads impassable, not having enough food. Then I asked myself, what is God using this storm to teach me. It took me two seconds to conclude it was all about faith. Earlier that month I wrote down this bible verse in the front cover of my Prayer journal:

Matthew 6:25-26 “Do not worry about your life. Look at the birds in the air. They do not Sow or reap or store away in barns and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.”

I thought back to when I was a child. I was blessed with loving adults who protected me from every storm. I didn't have to worry about getting my needs met and I didn't ever feel that I was lacking anything. It was a wonderful time of innocence.

It is my prayer that, as we walk through this world of uncertainty, we can be there for children and families who may not have that feeling of safety right now. We can do that through the ministries of the church.

Moving into February; with all the red hearts and intentions for love all around us; we can be reminded of the new commandment from Jesus which is to love one another just as He has loved us. This command to love others with self-sacrificial love serves as the identifying mark of his disciples.

When we bring our children to church on a regular basis or show up to teach Sunday School, be in the nursery, or conduct Children's Church we are being role models of that commandment. When we give our time to our outreach ministries such as Parent's Night Out, Sunday Night Children/Youth Worship, and The Blessing Cart, we are saying to a family or a child "I am here for you, you are important to me."

As we move on to February, I hope that you meditate and pray to hear how God would like you to love on the beautiful children that he sends our way.

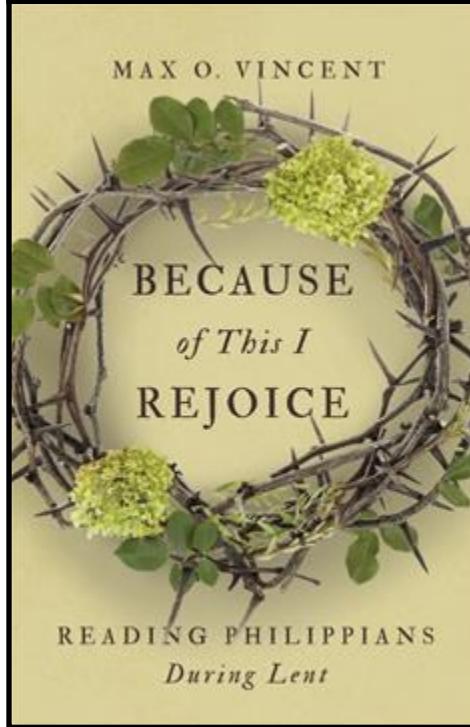


In His Love

Kim Laughlin



Ash Wednesday Service
Feb. 18th at 6 pm in
sanctuary.



- The Administrative Board will meet on Thursday, 2/12 @ 6:30 pm
- Vision Team meeting Sunday Feb. 8th after worship

This is the book we will use for our Lenten Bible Study. We will meet on Tuesday at 6 pm starting on Feb. 24th for 5 weeks.

If you would like me to order a book for you call the office. Cost is \$10

See you then!

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

Bethlehem United Methodist Church, 5300 Nesbit Road, Waxhaw, NC

Parents Night Out
February 20, 2026
6:00-8:30pm



Ages 4-10
Pack a table ready dinner and we will provide dessert



Movie Night & Popcorn
Art/Crafts
Games

RSVP by 2/13/2026

kim@bethlehemchurchonline.org

Bethlehem UMC
5300 Nesbit Road
Waxhaw, NC 28173
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: 704-764-3602



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united methodist church
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