



CHAPEL CHATTER

Open Hearts | Open Minds | Wide Open Doors!

And Are We Yet Alive...

Annual Conference begins with this Charles Wesley hymn. It was his brother John Wesley who around 1780 (something familiar about that year) began using it “for the Society...at meeting.” The first verse starts off with those words, “And are we yet alive, and see each other’s face?” It is a longing we all have to come back together and see each other’s face. It will happen, in the Lord’s time. The third verse states, “What troubles have we seen, what mighty conflicts past, fightings without, and fears within, since we assembled last!” A hymn written in 1749 provides us with the words that reflect much of 2020 since we assembled last on March 8. Charles Wesley in verse four reminds us, “Yet out of all the Lord hath brought us by his love; and still he doth his help afford, and hides our life above.” God is seeing us through these times and our faith will bring us peace and consolation in the midst of these days.

What I didn’t know about this hymn is that Charles Wesley wrote it so that those who read the poem or sang the hymn could understand the way of salvation. Verse five asks us to go out into the world and proclaim, actually to “boast of his redeeming power” that saves us from sin while verse six calls us to take up our cross and “reckon all things loss so we may Jesus gain.” There were two more verses that have been omitted in our hymn book. Charles went on to write, “Jesus, to Thee we bow, and for thy Coming wait: give us for good some token now in our imperfect state; apply the hallowing Word, tell each who looks for Thee, Thou shalt be perfect as thy Lord, Thou shalt be all like me!” Charles Wesley believes that as we wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus we can be made perfect in love in our lifetime by living out the Word of God.

John Wesley gave us tools in the three simple rules: Do No Harm, Do All the Good You Can, and Practice the Ordinances of God (worship, study, fasting, communion, small accountability groups, prayer). Doing no harm is one of the more challenging rules that I find myself stumbling over often.

Our greatest challenge today is to “take up the cross and gladly reckon all things loss.” Or as Jesus puts it, *“²⁴ If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?”* (Matthew 16:24-26) If we are practicing the ordinances of God, we may find in the midst of our prayer life, our study, our worship and our fasting God challenging us in our daily lives to let go of things, of attitudes, of schedules, of wants and desires that block our ability to follow.

For times such as these, we, the followers of Jesus Christ have much to offer the world. My prayer is that as we grow closer to God and one another we provide others a glimpse of the Kingdom. Consider how inviting it is to be seen and known, welcomed and loved. Offer the invitation for others to come and meet Jesus in a community that loves unconditionally.

But you may be wondering when are we going...

Back to...

Every September we have the rhythm of getting back to school and back to church. This year going back to ... doesn't quite look the same. Students are at their dining room table or at their desks in their bedrooms. Google Chrome books open for virtual learning. Some students have staggered in person learning and their classrooms reconfigured with sneeze guards and desks distanced. Parents are making the best choices to keep their children learning and families safe. Zeb Vance Elementary School has reported they do not need us to gather supplies, but backpacks are welcome. We have volunteered and become a Vance County School Hotspot for students who need access to wifi to download assignments.

Our college students have returned to their campuses. I checked with Makayla Beckham and she said that her dad's address is good for cards and notes. I would suggest, no treats because Scott and Thomas may enjoy them before Makayla gets home.

Austyn Abbott is at Liberty University. You can send her cards, notes, and treats to: Austyn Abbott, FB: 159730, 1971 University Boulevard, Lynchburg, VA 24515

What then does Back to Church Sunday look like? I have been asked often, "When are we going back to church?" Church has never stopped being church. Our worship looks very different, but we are out in the community distributing food, offering emotional support, and providing access to homes for those who need ramps or lifts. Church school has continued with emailed devotions and now instruction that is recorded and uploaded for others to view. A Zoom Bible Study is offered every Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m.



There are widely differing opinions around information regarding COVID-19, to include in person worship. The doors of Plank Chapel United Methodist Church have been open for people to be in the sanctuary during worship while we are live on Facebook. Our numbers have ranged from 6 to 13. The doors will continue to be open at 11:00 a.m. worship live on Facebook. There are some guidelines that must be followed. Enter and Exit wearing a mask. Offerings are placed in the collection plate by the last pew. Sit in pews not roped off. Family members may sit together. No congregating in the aisles, wait until you are outside to visit with one another. Masks may be removed during worship IF you are appropriately distanced from your neighbor. Should our numbers go above 40 masks during worship will be mandatory. Singing is soft voiced and meditative. There will be no choir for some time. Please note that your choices may cause others to make different choices. In these times we do not judge one person's choice against our own. Our goal is to do no harm. We will welcome you back in person when it is safe for you to do so, please follow our guidelines when you come.



At 8:00 a.m. worship begins in the Pavilion. Awakenings is a mixture of contemporary worship music with scriptures, prayers and a meditation that is conversational. We ask if you join us at 8:00 a.m. bring your own chair, own beverage and arrive masked.

Praying with you,

Pastor Carolyn

Until all can safely come...

Large gatherings will not resume in person until all can safely come. We will have Facebook Live for worship and Zoom for meetings.

Groups and committees that are 20 or less can meet in person following safety guidelines. Still some in the smaller groups will prefer to meet through Zoom, that will always be scheduled.

Virtual Plank Chapel

Worship without COVID-19 danger
Live audio during the 11:00 service is on 107.3 FM in our parking lot
Video of the 11:00 Sunday service is live on Facebook

Go online to: facebook.com/plankchapelUMC about 10:55

Video of recent 11:00 services can be replayed at any time

Also online at: facebook.com/plankchapelUMC

Replay audio or video from older services at , archives link

Church School

The Fall Study is on our "Encounter" The writer of the student book lessons is Chuck Aaron; the teacher book writer is David Mosser. **The Fall books are in the Fellowship Hall on the Red Table.**

So That You Can See: The lessons in this unit help us focus on salvation and what it means through example and explanation. We move from the conversion of Paul to a number of Paul's writings, where he speaks out of his thoughtful understanding of salvation through Christ and out of his personal experience of receiving Christ. We are challenged to consider our own salvation and how we can live faithfully into it.

Spiritual Practice - Mindfulness, Listening, Silence

Remember Who You Are: The lessons in this unit call us to consider who we are as children of God and followers of Christ. At the heart of who we are lies the important concept of covenant. The covenant that God made with Israel is a defining theological affirmation of the Old Testament. The covenant that God made with the church through Christ's blood is a defining theological affirmation of the New Testament. These lessons help us look more closely at those critical covenants and how they inform our thoughts, actions, and relationships.

Spiritual Practice - Confession

In This Place: The daily readings in this unit call us to think more deeply and specifically about worship by looking at places where, in the Scriptures, worship takes place. We will look at ad hoc altars,

synagogues, the church, and worship at the throne of God. In each case, we will be challenged to evaluate our worship and broaden our understanding of where and how worship can happen.

Spiritual Practice -Worship



It is nice to be back in Sunday School when Tim can teach. We have plenty of room to safely distance in the Fellowship Hall. It is good to be with actual people.

I will continue to do a short summary of the Sunday School lesson each week.

Thanks to Rev. Carolyn for proofreading and sending it out to you. I hope you are enjoying my take on the lesson.

We don't know when things will be back to normal or what normal will look like.

Hoping to see you in church soon,

Donald Rose

Reach out to Donald Rose if you want to attend on Sunday mornings and do not know if class will be held - home phone - 252-438-8645 or email: mcgheej@vance.net

2020 Church Council Meeting September 8 - 7:00 p.m. - Fellowship Hall and Zoom

In this meeting we will be approving: 2021 Budget, 2021 Leadership, 2021 Pastoral Salary in preparation for our 2020 Charge Conference - October 3 @ 11:00 a.m. The State of the Church Report and the Pastor's Report on Pastoral Ministry will also be shared.

Voting members of Church Council are also Charge Conference voting attendees:

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Carolyn Roy
 Lay Leaders: Tim Smith (22), Mike Ranes (21)
 Chairperson, Church Council: Mike Ranes (20)
 Chairperson, Finance Committee: Mac Wilson (20)
 Chairperson, Trustees: Todd Wilson (20)
 Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Relations: Susan Sears (20)
 Chairperson, Inward Formation: Sally Coghill (20)
 Chairperson, Outward Witness: Lori Litton (21)
 Lay Member of Annual Conference : Lori Litton
 Alt Lay Member of Annual Conference: Peggy Hernandez
 Recording Secretary: Lorraine Abbott
 Finance Secretary: Judy Wilson
 Membership Secretary: Darlene Ranes
 Treasurer: Scott Ritchey
 President, United Methodist Men: Thomas Beckham
 President, United Methodist Women: Darlene Ranes
 United Methodist Youth Fellowship : Avery Thomas (21)
 Communications Coordinators: Gwen Ritchey, Darlene Ranes

From our Finance

Chairperson: Mac Wilson

Your continued support of the ministries of Plank Chapel United Methodist Church are greatly appreciated. Thank you for what you have done and as you are able may continue to do. You are more than welcome to drop your offering at the house or mail it to Plank Chapel, c/o Financial Secretary, Mrs. Judy Wilson, 3969 Bobbitt Road, Kittrell, NC 27544.

Charge Conference - October 3 - 11:00 a.m.

This is a virtual Charge Conference with our new District Superintendent, Ismael Ruiz-Millan. The link will be sent out to all who join by Zoom and those who wish to attend Charge Conference in person can come to the Fellowship Hall - if you do so please arrive around 10:45 a.m.



Ismael is originally from San Luis Rio Colorado Sonora, México. Ismael received a B.S degree in Accounting from Sonora State University, Sonora, Mexico (2002), and a Master of Divinity degree from Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC (2010). He was ordained an elder in 2012.

Ismael moved to North Carolina from his hometown in Mexico in 2003, with a plan to be in the United States only for one year – however God had a different plan. In 2004, he was appointed as interim supply pastor at *Unidos por Cristo* in Grimesland, N.C. In 2010, he was appointed to serve the Brookland-Brooksdale charge in Roxboro, N.C. (now New Brook UMC). In 2011, Ismael was appointed to extension ministries as the Director of the Hispanic House of Studies at Duke

Divinity School. For the last two years, he was also the director of global education and intercultural formation. During his tenure at Duke Divinity School, Ismael developed and taught courses on pastoral care to pastors and laypersons from Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru. He has also taught courses on mission and World Christianity in the Course of Study at Duke. He has developed seminars, workshops, and learning opportunities on Cultural Humility and Leadership. In addition, he directed different programs within Duke Divinity School that targeted students and non-Hispanic clergy and laity who wanted to be in ministry with the Hispanic and Latino population in the U.S.

Additionally, Ismael serves on different boards including the North Carolina Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the Board of Directors of the General Board of Global Ministries, and the Executive Committee of the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino ministries. Ismael regularly leads educational, cultural, and language immersions to the Mexico-U.S. border and Guatemala. However, what he most enjoys in life is spending time with his wife of 16+ years, Alma, his son Alec, and his daughter Sheccid.

He offers devotions on the Heritage District page of the North Carolina Conference: <https://heritagedistrictnc.org>

Memory Walk 2020/2021

The Memory Walk Team met and rescheduled our walk for April 17, 2021. The site on Dementia Alliance is still active. To date we have raised \$80.00 towards our \$3,000.00 goal.



<https://www.classy.org/event/2020-plank-chapel-umc-church-walk/e272731>



ENGAGE. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

Announcing: MOVE to De-feet Dementia

This fall's Walks to De-feet Dementia will be moving to anywhere and everywhere YOU are! Although we will not have an in-person gathering this year, our new Move to De-feet Dementia series will unite us all across the state to engage together and help families of people living with dementia access CARE – Comfort, Assistance, Resources & Education.

Please Join Us!

Your contributions through MOVE will go towards Plank Chapel's goal of \$3,000.00 - Shall we step and move - April isn't that far away - time to walk!

Community Prayers

For... Faye Moss, Lysa Mackey, Thomas Fowler, Frank and Susan Babicz, Judy Hanson, Charlotte LaLas, Elizabeth Moss Wilson, Evie Odom, Freddie McGhee, James Medlin, Martha Rowland, James Deans, David Driver, Ruth Hailey, Tilly Hughes, Faye Young

- For... healing and reconciliation
- For... those facing medical procedures
- For... those grieving
- For... those without food, jobs, shelter
- For... the lost and afraid
- For... Plank Chapel
- For... God's church
- For... Our local cities and counties
- For... Our state
- For... Medical Staff, Truck Drivers, Store workers
- For... Small Business owners, Big Business owners
- For... those whose jobs are in jeopardy or lost
- For... Our military, families, and veterans
- For... all in harms way
- For... Our nation
- For... God's world



Seeking your Pictures

Each week I ask you to tell me who is worshipping with you on line - now I am asking you to send your photos in. My plan is to fill the "do not sit here" pews with your photos and the photos of your pets that join in each week. The plan is to have the pictures in place for October 4.

Did you know that our canine/feline on line attendance is about 12 and currently cats outnumber dogs - not certain what that says about their salvation!



Feeding the Community

Cokesbury Food Pantry Sundays

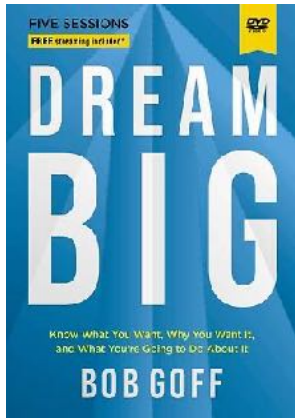
August 30 and September 13 & 27
Nonperishable Goods



Join us under the Pavilion. Breakfast biscuits will be provided. It is a "bring your own morning beverage." Contact Thomas Beckham if you plan on attending. (Bad weather - we will meet indoors)

Dream Big - A Five Week Study

coming this Fall. Video teaching by Bob Goff and group discussions led by Lori Litton. We will be both in person and offering Zoom connections.



In this five-session video study, bestselling author Bob Goff dares to ask the questions: What would you do if opinion, reason, or probability were no objects? What do you deeply desire to do even if it scares you to the marrow of your bones? What were you meant to do even if no other person thinks you should? He shares stories from the Bible that show how God called certain individuals to follow him--regardless of their lack of "qualifications"--and how those people changed the world when they dared to follow God's dreams for their lives. In the same way, God is calling us to step into the version of our lives that he intended for us before others told us it was impossible and once again dream big.

A Step Along the Way

A prayer by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Oscar Romero

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

Amen.



ACTS, Cokesbury Food Pantry, The Help Center all are doing what they can to feed those in need this restricted time. If you are able help where you can. Reach out to neighbors - they too may need food, paper goods, a friendly voice, or a kind word. Thank you for all that you are doing already!

Fall Events - COVID-19 Modified

All Souls Night - October 31 - we will still light up the cemetery - please consider bringing additional lights

All Saints Sunday - November 1 - Honoring those who died in 2020 - worship will highlight our beloved saints with songs and stories

UMM BBQ - Taking this year off
Pilgrimage - Going virtual - ask Pastor Carolyn for details

Thanksgiving Offering - November 22 - Drop off your fresh produce/ baked goods/cans and nonperishables on Saturday - Sunday's altar offering will go to ACTS and Cokesbury Food Banks as well as distribute to those in our community in need

