

Pastor's Note

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! We just celebrated the glorious Easter Sunday—the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His victory over sin and death once and for all. The resurrection of Jesus stands as an unshakable testimony that Jesus of Nazareth is who He said He was—the Son of God, the One true King and the Savior of all who believe. And because of the resurrection of Jesus, the world has never been the same again.

Now that Easter Sunday is behind us, it is easy to set aside the message of Christ's resurrection until next spring. There's a tendency to view Easter as a one-time special event that occurs once a year, a commemorative anniversary of a past event. As one preacher says, *"the resurrection will fade into the white noise of our lives, making no discernible impact."*

Make no mistake! Easter is not something we remember as a one-time event or a past event. Rather, Easter is an ongoing reality that takes place in everyday life. As one theologian says, “Easter is something we live and breathe.” That is why in the Christian calendar known as the “Great Fifty Days” that begins at sunset Easter Eve and ends with Pentecost—the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church recorded in Acts 2. Therefore, the Easter season gives us time to rejoice and experience what we mean when we say Christ is risen and that we, as the church, are the body of the Risen Lord. Where is Easter present in our lives today? Where do we see the presence of Christ’s resurrection most evident in the life of His church?

We see Christ’s resurrection at Bethel UMC through its thriving multi-generational "Dinner Church" that meets once a month for a meal, fellowship and conversation around faith. The Dinner Church gets its inspiration from the early church and Jesus' ministry through meals.

On the other hand, we see Christ’s resurrection at Plank Chapel UMC whenever we welcome children and youth to the “Journey” every month for Bible stories, crafts, games, food & team-building. It is creative, lay-driven, inclusive, holistic and transformative. We see Christ’s resurrection in the birthing of "The Gathering" that meets as a hub of the community and offers a place to belong through prayer, inspirational talk, meal and fellowship around the table. We see Christ’s resurrection whenever members offer their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness, visit the sick and address the needs of the community. We see Christ’s resurrection whenever we engage in ecumenical ministries w/ fellow Christians and area churches through the Senior Circle, Kittrell Tent Revival & National Day of Prayer. We see Christ’s resurrection in the Connect Church process and our partnership with Salvation Army, Community Watch and Kittrell Fire Department. And we see Christ’s resurrection throughout the three sessions of our Visioning & Conversation. These are just some of the things where Christ’s resurrection is evident in the life of His church.

This Easter season, just like Mary Magdalene and the early disciples, let us tell the whole world that Jesus is alive! Let us invite families, friends and neighbors to “come and see” Christ’s resurrection being lived out right here at Bethel UMC and Plank Chapel UMC. And that is exactly what we will do because Jesus is alive!

Risen Savior, You conquered the grave, and we are singing for Your glory. Bless us with Your resurrection rampage— a rampage that summons us to shout yes to the birth of new creation in our midst. May we experience the birth quakes of new life in our lives, in our church, and in our communities. The Son is up! And we are up with the Son, despite all those things that seek to pull us down to despair. We are Your Easter people. Amen.

Join us for Open House Saturday, May 3, 2025

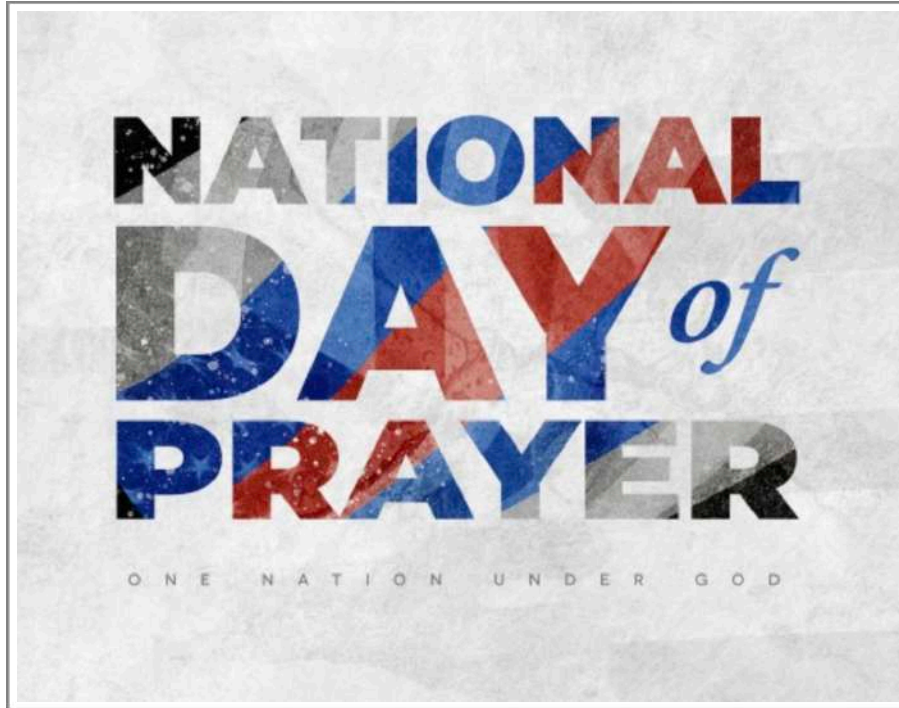


Our Open House will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at camp and is free. It will be a day of fun and fellowship as we open some camp activities, provide camp tours and see our camp friends. We will dedicate the new Friends of Camp Don Lee Cabin at Open House.

This is a wonderful opportunity for families, new and returning, to come see camp and explore our cabins and facilities before summer camp.

Activities offered include tours, canoeing, crafts, nature and sailing (weather permitting). A hot dog lunch on the grounds will be provided at no charge (donations accepted). The day will conclude with the dedication of our new Friends of Camp Don Lee Cabin at approximately 2 p.m.

RSVPs are helpful to us in planning but not required. Questions? Email info@donleecenter.org



The National Day of Prayer is an American tradition rooted deeply in the history of the U.S., with origins reaching all the way back to the birth of the nation... as old as the country itself, starting with the Continental Congress calling days of prayer in 1775 for a then-new nation. At the height of the Civil War in 1863, Abraham Lincoln also called for a Day of Prayer.

Come join us as we gather with fellow Prayer Warriors and Churches in the Kittrell community for this year's National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 1st, 7:00pm-8:30pm at Kittrell Community Center (27 Main Street Kittrell, NC 27544).

*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”
(2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)*



We had twelve leaders that met on April 9th for the third & final session of the **"Conversation & Visioning" at Plank Chapel UMC.** Pastor Edgar welcomed everyone and led the Gathering Hymn, "Be Thou My Vision".

Our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. David Joyner led the devotion from Eugene Peterson's The Message version of 1 John 3:16-17. He reminded everyone of the importance of "why" we are the church-- the body of Christ. "As we prepare ourselves for the Holy Week, we need to remember who we are as followers of Jesus Christ. We need to fix our eyes to Jerusalem, to the cross and to the very reason why Jesus came, died and resurrected. God is already doing amazing things at Plank Chapel UMC. All you need to do is to always remember the "why" -- the church's mission and core values."

After the devotion, Rev. Joyner led the big-group discussion on the draft copy of the Mission Statement (What is God calling us to do?) & Core Values (Who we are, how we engage in ministry and what we want to be about in the future?) Rev. Joyner asked us the question: What are the current ministries that Plank Chapel UMC we are doing that embody our church's core values? Here are some of the responses:

WORSHIP - Awakenings, 11am Sunday Worship Service, The Gathering, Journey, Senior Circle, Wednesday Online Prayer Meeting

HOSPITALITY - Hospitality Team, Journey, United Women in Faith, Prayer Ministry, Decorations in the Fellowship Hall, Online Worship Experience, Visiting Church Members, Ongoing Mission w/ Local School

DISCIPLESHIP - Forming New Leaders, Exercise Class, Journey, The Gathering, Relational & Being Authentic

GENEROSITY - Koffee Korner, One-On-One Relationship w/ Journey Children & Youth, Launching New & Innovative Ways in Reaching Out to the Community such as Connect Church, Exercise Class, The Gathering, Journey & Rooted in Love

Rev. Joyner led us into a deeper conversation about God who is always on the move. He invited us to join with what God is already doing and about to do at Plank Chapel UMC. "God is doing miraculous things! Never limit God! We need to shift from small thinking to God-sized dreaming. Be the next-level thinkers! How can we now prepare the church for continuing growth and renewal? Be ready to adapt and always remember to focus on the cross... on the "why"... on the church's mission and core values."

The participants offered edit, input and suggestions regarding the Mission Statement & Core Values.

In closing, Pastor Edgar presented a beautiful birdhouse (painted by one of our Journey kids) to Rev. Joyner as an expression of our gratitude for his wonderful leadership and for leading all the three sessions of the "Conversation & Visioning". Rev. Joyner closed the gathering with Prayer and Sending Forth.

The next step now is for the Church Council to review and approve the Mission Statement & Core Values with the prayerful goal of presenting this for God's glory and to the congregation on Pentecost Sunday.



GIVING FLOWERS IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

You are invited to generously give flowers on Sunday Worship Services for God's glory and in honor or in memory of your loved ones. Please contact Judy Wilson @ Judith9563@gmail.com or (252) 492-0624.

HONORING THE KITTRELL FIRE DEPARTMENT

In honor and appreciation of all the Kittrell firefighters and their families, we are inviting to the May 18th Sunday Worship Service Honoring the Kittrell Fire Department. After the service, **there** will be a luncheon fellowship sponsored by the United Methodist Men. All are invited!



The Safer Sanctuaries committee, in partnership with the Center for Leadership Excellence, invites you to *Safer Sanctuaries: Training Leaders in Abuse Prevention*, with Charlotte Brendel.

About the Workshop:

Since 1996, when the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at eliminating potential for abuse in the church, abuse prevention has been an important part of church policy-making and implementation. United Methodists are called to justice and advocacy for those whose voices are often overlooked or not heard, including children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Churches are responsible for ensuring a safe environment for all persons. The risk of harm to children, youth, and vulnerable adults can be reduced through the implementation of abuse prevention policies.

A primary focus for the NCC Safer Sanctuaries Team is to provide resources that will help churches as they develop policies, train staff/volunteers, and implement those policies. Individual church policies should be written with consideration of the church's specific context, so there is not a one-size-fits-all policy. Recommendations for abuse prevention policy content is offered by the NCC Safer Sanctuaries Team and may be found on the [webpage](#).

This workshop is for church leaders who will train others in abuse prevention. Participants are encouraged to bring a copy of their church abuse prevention policy.

Community Easter Egg Hunt





United Methodist Men Breakfast Fellowship will be held on Sunday, May 18th, 8:00am-9:00am. All men are invited

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

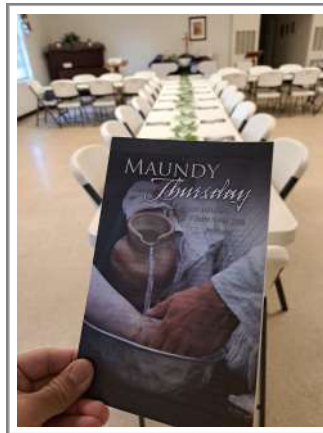
United Women in Faith Sunday was held on April 27th celebrating its mission, ministry and leadership. WE are grateful for Darlene Raney for her leadership and for sharing God's Word during the service. The United Women in Faith are composed of women who are "powerful, fearless force" driven by God's love and united in sisterhood. With a focus on women, children and youth, we act for justice and transform communities. Our next regular meeting will be on Sunday, May 18th, 3:00pm. All women are invited!

Safer Sanctuaries: Training Leaders in Abuse Prevention is led by Rev. Charlotte Brendel, current chair of the NCC Safer Sanctuaries Team.

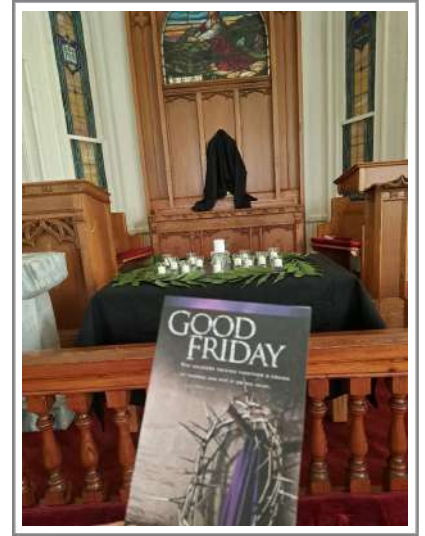
Thursday, July 24, 2025, 10am – 12pm

Saint Luke UMC (Sanford)

Maundy Thursday



Good Friday



EASTER SUNDAY





Journey children and youth planted a vegetable garden during the April 27 meeting of the group at Plank Chapel United Methodist Church.

Leadership team leader Wayne Young opened the gathering with prayer followed by the youngsters splitting up at four raised garden beds to start planting. Team leader Peggy Hernandez explained the various plants, donated to the group by Susan Sears, as the kids dug into the project. When finished, the youngsters placed identification markers at their plants.

The garden will be maintained during the growing season by Journey leadership as well as some of the youth.

A spirited dodge ball game followed in the lawn, ending in a 5-5 tie between the two teams.

Pastor Edgar DeJesus blessed the meal, provided by Peggy Hernandez and Susan Sears. Shakita Huerta also donated a tray of fresh fruit. Team leader Nancy Gustafson offered a devotional during the meal.

There will not be a regular meeting of Journey in May - generally the fourth Sunday of the month - due to an out-of-town fieldtrip. The group will gather again 4 to 6 p.m., Sunday, June 22.

Local and area children and youth, ages 5 to 18, are welcome to be part of Journey. There is no fee to participate, but registration is required when attending. Team leader Scott Ritchey coordinates the monthly registration.

Anyone wishing to contribute food and (or) juice and bottled water for Journey may contact Lora Young at 336-504-7247.

Journey is a safe and caring space where children and youth can encounter the love of Christ Jesus through "becoming, belonging and believing." Monthly activities include story-telling, devotionals, games, music and food.

For more information, contact Ron Gustafson at 203-641-2889 or visit the Journey website at plankchapel.org.



April 20th Easter Sunday

KOFFEE KORNER

"Koffee Korner"-- a women's group that meets every first Wednesday of the month. We will meet on May 7th, 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Nancy Gustafson @ [203-232-1145](tel:203-232-1145).



"STRONGER TOGETHER" EXERCISE CLASS

The "Stronger Together" Exercise Class meets every Monday & Thursday @ 6:00-7:00pm. Open to everyone. For more information, please contact Debra Newman @ [252-915-7005](tel:252-915-7005).



April 27-30 Kittrell Tent Revival





4TH SATURDAY FREE MARKET

May 24th is 4th Saturday Free Market from 9:00am-11:am in the Fellowship Hall.

As an outreach ministry to the community, we need your generous donations of clothing, books, dishes, pots & pans. Please bring them the week of May 18th and place them in the Youth Rom. On Friday, May 23rd, we need volunteers to help set-up the free market in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you for being the hands & feet of Christ!

PLANK CHAPEL UMC CHOIR

If you are musically inclined and willing to offer your gifts and talents, we would love to have you join the choir! We have Choir Practice every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. For the month of March, we will practice on April 9th & 23rd, 3:00pm.



All Christians are called to ministry. The work of the church is not just for pastors—it is for all of us. The ministry of the laity is essential for our shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. But how is God calling *you* to serve? And how can you best be equipped to respond to that call?

Lay Servant Ministries provides training and certifications for laity to grow as disciples and develop the skills needed to serve effectively in their local church and beyond. Whether you feel called to lead, teach, preach, or serve in mission, Lay Servant Ministries can support you in your journey.

Join us for the Day of Discovery to learn more about the different options available to laity ready to make a deeper commitment, to listen for God's voice, and to discern your next faithful step.

There's no pressure, no expectation—only an invitation to explore where God may be leading you. Whether you're just beginning to sense a nudge or you're actively seeking your next step, this day is for you.

Schedule of the Day:

10am-12pm: Listening for God's Call

- Opening Worship, with Fairway District Superintendent Sunny Limm preaching
- Laity Stories, including a certified lay servant, certified lay speaker, certified lay minister, deaconness / home missionary, and licensed local pastor.

CHANGE BUCKET

The May 2025 Change Bucket has been designated for Methodist Home for Children.

- Methodist Home for Children works with children who've been neglected, abused, and traumatized.
 - We work with adults who lack basic coping and parenting skills.
 - We work with juvenile offenders who are unparented, failing in school, looking for acceptance in all the wrong places
 - We work with teens who are struggling with mental illness and substance abuse.
 - We work with children who are diagnosed with severe emotional and developmental disorders.
 - We work with preschoolers who are at risk already for falling behind in life.
- Here's how we do it: Foster Care & Adoption, Family Preservation, Early Childhood Education, Juvenile Justice & Specialized Services

BLESSING BOX MINISTRY

Plank Chapel UMC saw a great need in the community for those vulnerable to have access to the food they cannot always afford. And so, we launched the Blessing Box Ministry in 2022 and encouraged church members as well as the community to help keep the box stocked with non-perishable food items for those in need. Also, please check your book shelves so that we can offer children and adult books as a lending library. We give thanks to God for your generous gifts and support for this outreach ministry.

AWAKENINGS

Renew, fresh and revive your spirit as we worship our Awesome God at "Awakenings" every Sunday, 8:00am-9:00am (except third Sunday of the month). "Awakenings" offers contemporary music, come-as-you-are setting, relevant Bible-based conversation and a good cup of coffee! The "Awakenings" will meet on May 4th, 11th & 25th.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY

Graduate Recognition Sunday will be on June 1st and we will honor and celebrate those Graduating Class of 2025. If you know any church youth or young adults who are graduating high school, college or post-graduate education this school year, please contact Pastor Edgar.



SENIOR CIRCLE

Senior Circle is a wonderful way to meet new friends, build relationships and have fun among fellow Christians! We meet every third Wednesday of the month with a program and light lunch @ Plank Chapel UMC Fellowship Hall. Our next meeting is May 21st, 10:00am. All are invited!



WEDNESDAY ONLINE PRAYER MEETING

Prayer Warriors are invited to join the Wednesday Online Prayer Meeting every week from 7:00pm-7:30pm. We will meet on May 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th.

Edgar Raymund A. DeJesus is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96731072214?pwd=z6O3HHRhaCw13h03XmuULTm0Y9A4RJ.1>

Meeting ID: 967 3107 2214

Passcode: 1RL4uP

Prayer Requests

Tim Smith, Frances Beckham, Faye Moss, Ricky Satterwhite, Sammy Burgess, Bessie Newman, Fawn Westmoreland, Rose Marshall, Alston Monroe, Ronnie Currin, Jeanette Weaver, Jimmy Bizzell, Debra Flemming, Kerry Alexander, Cecil Brown, Bryant Bobbitt, Clarence Englebright, Freddie Oettinger, Donald Rose McGhee & Joni Ayers. Shut-Ins: John Rogers, Martha Rowland, Kay Deans, Ben & Jackie Brown, Virgie Eaves, Freddie McGhee & Frances Roberts. (For prayer request, please call **919-418-0682** or email Pastor Edgar @ edejesus@nccumc.org.)



SUN 27	MON 28	TUE 29	WED 30	THU May 1	FRI 2	SAT 3
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