

### Pastor's Note

Advent is here! Advent comes from a Latin word which means “coming”. It is a season of waiting, preparation and anticipation for what comes next. The Bible tells us of the first Advent – God Emmanuel. Jesus was born to a world filled with uncertainties, crisis and those troubled in soul. Out of God’s love for us, He sent His Son, incarnate and born into flesh. God chose Mary and Joseph at a time of enormous crisis and uncertainties to usher the world-changing birth of Jesus Christ

Jesus was not the Messiah most people were expecting or hoping for at all! Everything about Jesus’ life stood in stark contrast to worldly values. Jesus arrived on the scene not in great strength, but vulnerable and weak. He was a Palestinian Jew who grew up in a community of marginalized and oppressed people. As a matter of fact, Jesus spent the earliest years of his life as a refugee in Africa, running from political genocide. And growing up He lived in a little village as a member of an ordinary, working-class family. When Jesus got older, He resisted the world’s obsessions with wealth and power and instead identified and ministered with the marginalized, vulnerable and powerless. He suffered, died and resurrected so that we can have a hope-filled life. This was the first Advent!

The Bible promises of another Advent—the second coming of Christ. In every Holy Communion we say this proclamation: “Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again”. As Christians, we anticipate God’s coming reign, God’s future for this world and all creation. However, one thing that is clear is that no one knows the exact time of Jesus’ return. Jesus said, “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” (Matthew 24:36)

When the Bible talks about the second coming of Christ, there is also a reference about “end times” also known as the last days or the end of the age, referring to the period of time just before Jesus Christ returns to earth. In Matthew 24:3, the disciples asked Jesus about the signs of His coming and the end of the age. Jesus responded by giving them a list of events that would occur, including wars, famines, earthquakes, false prophets, and persecution of believers. There is also the “final judgment”— the event in which God will judge all people, both believers and non-believers. This judgment will determine each person’s eternal destiny. In Revelation 20:11-15, John describes the great white throne judgment, in which all the dead will be raised and judged according to what they have done.

For believers, the “final judgment” is not something to fear. In fact, without a doubt, the return of Christ is going to be an exciting event! There’s nothing in this world that gives hope to the believer like the return of Christ. The second coming of Christ brings us hope amid a broken world, reminding us that our struggles are not in vain. It reassures us that justice will prevail, righteousness will triumph, and every tear will be wiped away. In a world filled with uncertainty and despair, the hope of Christ’s return shines as a beacon of light, guiding us through the darkest times. There’s nothing that stirs the soul like knowing that one day you and I (and every follower of Christ) will be with our Lord and Savior Jesus!

Therefore, how prepared are you if Jesus is coming back today? In other words, are you living your life today in such a way that you won’t be caught off guard if Jesus will show up today? Sadly, there are many today who ignore Jesus’ return! They go through life as if Jesus is not coming back!

This Advent, I invite each of you to take a moment for personal reflection. Consider the impact of the second coming of Christ on your life and your relationship with Him. Reflect on the hope and anticipation that fills your heart as you await the day you will be united with Christ forever. May you have a renewed sense of urgency and purpose in your walk with Christ. And let the truth of Christ’s second coming inspire you to live with steadfast faith, unwavering hope, and an unquenchable love for God and others.

Merry Christmas and a hopeful New Year!

## **PLANK CHAPEL UMC CHOIR**

The Choir is getting ready for Advent season! If you are musically inclined and willing to offer your gifts and talents, we would love to have you join the choir! Choir Practice is every Wednesday, 7:00pm. Please contact Janet Bobbitt if you are interested.

## **PROJECT BE A BLESSING**

*"Project Be A Blessing"* assembled and distributed 21 duffel bags from Plank Chapel UMC & Union Chapel UMC during Thanksgiving week. Praise the Lord! This project is a new outreach ministry of Plank Chapel UMC with the main goal of being the hands and feet of Christ to foster children in the community. Currently, there are more than 10,000 children and teenagers in the foster care system in North Carolina. We continually accept monetary and material donations throughout the Advent season. Please make your check payable to Plank Chapel UMC and mark your check: "Project Be A Blessing". For more info, please contact our Lay Leader, Peggy Hernandez at (252) 204-3045.



## **CHANGE BUCKET**

Change Bucket for December 2025 has been designated for UMCOR Advance Specials (International Disaster Response & Recovery #982450. When a natural or human-caused disaster strikes outside of the United States, UMCOR serves as the primary channel for the United Methodist assistance. In the short term, UMCOR steps in to ease human suffering. In the long term, UMCOR cooperates with local partners to help them develop their own response mechanisms. This fund serves as the primary funding vehicle for all disasters outside of the US.

## **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 December 7th, 14th & 28th.

# Plank Chapel's Busy Barbecue Bees hard at work! 🐝🐝





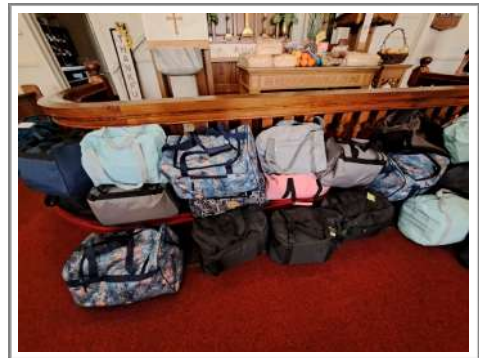
Hello Church Family,

I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has donated to Project Be A Blessing. The outpouring of generosity has been absolutely wonderful!

The foster children of Vance County will truly be blessed because through our work as the hands and feet of Christ. Having been in the foster care system myself, I can personally tell you how much our work means. The items you've donated will make a tremendous difference in the life of a child—Thank you!



So far, we've been able to assemble around 10 duffel bags from Plank Chapel, and Union Chapel has generously donated 11 duffel bags! I'm so grateful for everyone who has helped.



If anyone would like to support this ongoing project with a monetary donation, please make checks payable to Plank Chapel UMC with "PBAB" or "Project Be A Blessing" in the memo line.

If you'd prefer to donate items needed to fill a duffel bag, please reach out to me directly at 252-204-3045.

I've attached (or included below) a list of the items we still need. Thank you again for your incredible support and for helping us show these children that they are loved and not forgotten!

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| Socks      | Coloring book   |
| Deodorant  | Crayons         |
| Shampoo    | Colored pencils |
| Comb       | Stuffed animal  |
| Brush      | Water bottle    |
| Blanket    | Pens            |
| Toothbrush | Pencils         |
| Toothpaste | Towel           |
| Lotion     | Washclothes     |



Thank you so much!

***"Photos from the 'Be A Blessing' project at the Vance County DSS office!"***

Your sister in Christ,  
Peggy Hernandez



## **Advent 2025 Schedule**

### **Bethel UMC & Plank Chapel UMC Advent 2025 Schedule**

November 30 First Sunday of Advent

Awakenings 8:00am, Bethel UMC 9:30am & Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am

Hanging of the Greens @ Bethel UMC 9:30am

December 3 Koffee Korner @ Beth Heaton's Home 10:00am

Prayer Group Zoom Meeting 7:00pm

December 6 "The Gathering" @ Plank Chapel UMC 4:00pm-6:00pm

December 7 Second Sunday of Advent w/ Holy Communion

Awakenings 8:00am

Bethel UMC 9:30am

Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am

December 10 Prayer Group Zoom Meeting 7:00pm

December 12 Heritage District Clergy Christmas Party 12:30pm

December 13 Pilgrimage Youth & Families Christmas Fellowship.

@ Plank Chapel UMC 5:00pm

December 14 Third Sunday of Advent

Awakenings 8:00am,

Bethel UMC 9:30am &

Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am.

Journey Christmas Program @ Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am

Dinner Church & Christmas Party @ Bethel UMC 5:00pm

December 17 Senior Circle Christmas Fellowship @ Plank Chapel UMC 10:00am

Prayer Group Zoom Meeting 7:00pm

December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent/Service of Lessons & Carols.

Bethel UMC 9:30am & Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am

Christmas Fellowship @ Plank Chapel UMC 12noon

December 24 Joint Christmas Eve Communion & Candlelight Service @ Plank Chapel UMC 8:00pm

December 25 Christmas Day

December 28 First Sunday after Christmas

Awakenings 8:00am, Bethel UMC 9:30am & Plank Chapel UMC 11:00am

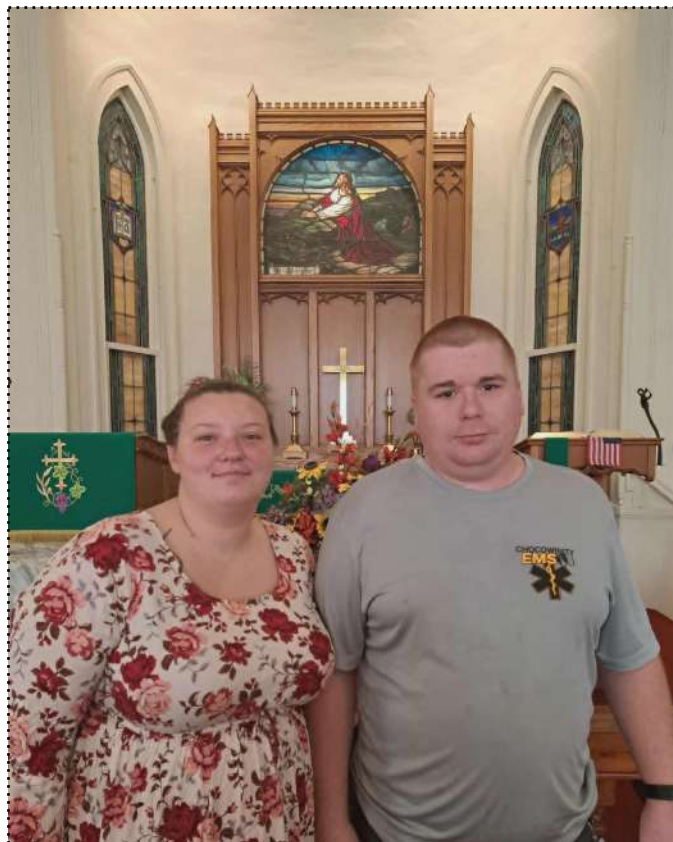
### **HARVEST STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN**

We give thanks to God to all who prayed and responded to God's invitation in offering their 2026 estimate of giving during the November 23rd Commitment Sunday. For those who were not able to attend, you can still get a card from the Finance Team and submit your completed commitment card to Judy Wilson (Financial Secretary). Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity!

### **THANKSGIVING GIFTS TO CHURCH MEMBERS IN NURSING HOMES & HOMEBOUND**

Plank Chapel UMC distributed Thanksgiving gifts (breads, fruits & veggies) to church members who are in nursing homes and homebound on November 23rd Thanksgiving Sunday. We also delivered non-perishable items to the Blessing Box Ministry. We are grateful for all your generous gifts of produce and non-perishable items.

## **Welcome to New Professing Members of Plank Chapel UMC**



We give thanks to God and welcome Cody James Benac & Audra Victoria Rice-- who joined Plank Chapel UMC on November 9th as new members by profession of faith. They are blessed with a daughter named Aubrie Destiny, who was baptized this year at Plank Chapel UMC and is actively attending the "Journey" Children & Youth.

Born and grew up in New York, Cody is a North Carolina paramedic, firefighter, safety officer and medical responder of the Kittrell Volunteer Fire Department. Audra was born and grew up in Florida. She is a stay-at-home mother going to school full-time for a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and looking into medical school. She is also a firefighter and medical responder of the Kittrell Volunteer Fire Department.

**KOFFEE KORNER**

"Koffee Korner"-- a women's group that meets every first Wednesday of the month. Our next gathering will be on December 3rd, 10:00am at the home of Beth Heaton.

**STRONGER TOGETHER"**  
**EXERCISE CLASS**

"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.

**CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP**

Come join our Christmas Fellowship on Sunday, December 21st right after the 11am Worship Service. Please bring your favorite covered-dish. All are invited! Bring your families & friends!



On Sunday, November 9, the children and youth of Journey at Plank Chapel United Methodist Church honored local veterans during the 11 a.m. worship service.

In observance of Veterans Day (November 11), dozens of American flags were placed along the church lawn facing the highway before the morning service.

Several Journey children, carrying flags, took part in a special processional into the sanctuary as the service began. Journey's *Alex Huerta* then approached the lectern, shared a brief history of Veterans Day, and invited all veterans in attendance to stand and be recognized.

The children proudly presented American flags to each veteran and also distributed flags to others in the congregation as a gesture of gratitude and remembrance.



**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](mailto:Judith9563@gmail.com) or (252) 492-0624.

**UNITED METHODIST MEN**

United Methodist Men extends its sincere gratitude to all who helped and support this year's Annual BBQ Event. In appreciation, the UMM will host a Pancake Breakfast Appreciation Fellowship on Sunday, January 18th, 8:00am-9:00am. The December 21st Men's Breakfast is cancelled due to the Christmas Covered-Dish Fellowship on the same day.

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH**

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. We are currently sponsoring the Angel Tree Project-- helping economically-challenged students of Zeb Vance Elementary School. Our next regular meeting will be on Sunday, December 7th, 3:00pm. All women 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 December 3rd, 10th, 17th. There will be no Wednesday Online Prayer Meeting on December 24th & 31st.

Please **see the Zoom** link below.

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**

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Tim Smith, Frances Beckham, Faye Moss, Sammy Burgess, Bessie Newman, Fawn Westmoreland, Ronnie Currin, Jeanette Weaver, Kerry Alexander, Bryant Bobbitt, Freddie Oettinger, Donald Rose McGhee, Bill Rohr, Debbie Fleming, Bonnie Allgood, Allison Tackett, Penny Howard, Tilley Hughes, James Satterwhite, Sally Coghill, Ben Brown, Diane Del Conte, Karin & Dave Driver, Jay Fuller, Susie Beal, Family of Bruce Solomon, Joni Ayers, Gloria Roberts, Angie Rowland, Kittrell community, our nation, peace in Gaza and the world. 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](mailto:edejesus@nccumc.org).)

### **PILGRIMAGE 2025**

Plank Chapel UMC sent 6 Youth and 5 Adult Mentors to Pilgrimage 2025 on November 7th-9th @ Rocky Mount Event Center. Praise the Lord! We are grateful to everyone for your prayers and support. Special appreciation to the United Methodist Men for their generous donation. For over 30 years, Pilgrimage has been creating a space for thousands of United Methodist youth (6th – 12th grades) and their mentors. It is a life-changing weekend event filled with amazing artists, thought provoking speakers, and inspiring youth leadership – all bearing witness to the transforming love of Christ. The Pilgrimage weekend is for students and adult student leaders looking for a weekend worship experience that calls everyone to a new or stronger faith in Jesus, challenging everyone to share God’s love in word and action. For more information about Pilgrimage 2025, please check the link: <https://nccpilgrimage.org/2025/>



Pilgrimage 2025 was a powerful weekend of worship, connection, and spiritual renewal—especially for our youth. As a group, we not only grew in faith but also strengthened our bond with one another, experiencing true togetherness throughout the journey.



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***Journey Hayride Draws Over 30 Children and Youth***

More than 30 children and youth enjoyed Journey's annual hayride on Saturday, November 22, at the home of leadership team members Lora and Wayne Young.

The evening began at 4 p.m. with a prayer circle led by Pastor Edgar DeJesus, followed by a devotional from Journey leadership member Nancy Gustafson. Games, food, and fellowship continued until sunset, when glowing headbands and necklaces were handed out and everyone boarded two hay wagons for the main event.

Under the stars, participants of all ages sang together as the wagons traveled through farmland and woods, returning about 30 minutes later full of smiles and new memories. Christmas Program Set for December 14.

Journey children and youth will present their Christmas program during the 11 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 14, followed by lunch and a celebration party in Fellowship Hall.

Local and area children and youth ages 5–18 are invited to participate in Journey at no cost. Pre-registration is required for the Christmas program—please call Ron Gustafson at 203-641-2889 to sign up.

**How to Help or Get Involved**

- To donate food, juice, or bottled water for upcoming Journey events, contact Lora Young at 336-504-7247.
- Monthly registration and financial reports are coordinated by team leader Scott Ritchey.

Journey provides a safe, caring environment where children and youth can encounter the love of Christ through "becoming, belonging, and believing." Monthly activities include storytelling, devotionals, games, music, and meals together.

For more information or to register, visit the Journey page at [plankchapel.org](http://plankchapel.org).





# Fall Hayride

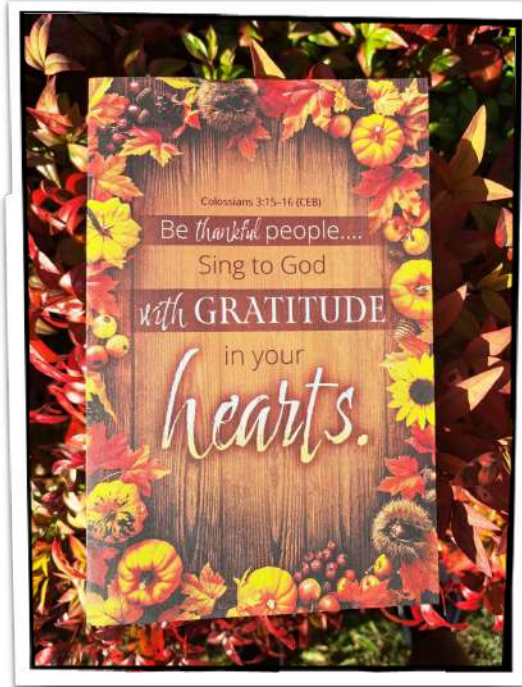
**CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

Christmas Caroling to Nursing Homes & Homebound is on Sunday, December 14th from 2:30pm-4:00pm. Please plan to arrive at the church at 2:15pm. We will carpool together. Let's go caroling!



**JOINT CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION & CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**

Bethel UMC & Plank Chapel UMC are inviting everyone to a Joint Christmas Eve Communion & Candlelight Service on Wednesday, December 24th, 8:00pm @ Plank Chapel UMC. This year's Christmas Eve Special Offering is designated for "Project Be A Blessing" -- a new outreach ministry to help foster children in the community. Please mark your check: "Christmas Eve Special Offering 2025".



Plank Chapel UMC and Journey Children & Youth distributed Thanksgiving bags to our church members who are in nursing homes and homebound. We thank Lora Young, Peggy Hernandez. Lori Litton & Nancy Gustafson who helped us pack and distribute the Thanksgiving bags.



### SENIOR CIRCLE NOVEMBER 19, 2025

After Faye Woodlief welcomed everyone and we shared concerns and blessings, Pastor Edgar gave a devotion about the true spirit of generous giving. Using Mark 12:41-44, he compared the gift of the poor widow's mite to the gifts of the wealthy donors. He explained that God knows "the condition of the heart" and the motives of the giver. He noted that the gift of the widow was sacrificial and given to express her love for God, whereas the gift of the wealthy person was given to impress men. True giving is a gift of love not to be measured by worldly standards.



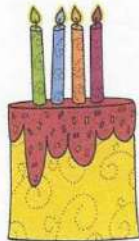
*Just a Few Titles*

*Thank You, Lord  
He Touched Me  
Just a Closer Walk  
Remind Me Dear Lord  
Soldiers of the Cross  
Something in the  
Graveyard  
Till the Storm Passes  
Somebody Touched Me  
I'll Fly Away*

Thank you, Stuart Currin, Jerry Guerrant, Conrad Hock, Bobby Jackson and Pete Collier for the beautiful, inspiring Gospel music. Their songs, music, and personal testimony filled the air as they sang of God's love, His comforting and strengthening presence and the future home that is waiting for those who follow His way. What a blessing!!!



*They also sang John Rogers's favorite song, Shall We Gather at the River and we enjoyed hearing him sing along.*



*It was good to see Conrad back in the group singing and playing. We have missed his music.*



Before closing the program, Janet Bobbitt had a special request that the Gospelaire's sing HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Bryant whose birthday was actually on the 19th and we included the names of our other November birthdays, Faye Woodlief and Pastor Edgar.

*Happy Thanksgiving!  
With Love and Prayers,  
Your Senior Circle Friends*



*Surprise*  
*In response to Peggy Hernandez's "Be a Blessing" Project, Alice Braswell, The Women of Joy and members of Union Chapel surprised Peggy with twelve full duffle bags before the Senior Circle meeting.*



**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.

**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 Senior Circle Christmas Fellowship is December 17th, 10:00am. All are invited!

