

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.
Colossians 3: 12-13

Dear Friends and Members of Union Presbyterian Church,
In his Essay, "On Forgiveness," C.S. Lewis imagines a pretty bizarre scenario. He wonders what would happen if you hurt your arm really bad. So bad that you thought it might be broken. You head off to the doctor to get it looked at. But once you got there, you only show the doctor your leg, your foot, your eye, and your ears. You don't show the doctor your arm. The doctor examines all of these places on your body and says that they look just fine. So you go home, still with an arm that is potentially broken. Who would do that? Lewis wonders if many of us are guilty of doing something very similar all the time with God and one another.

Lewis writes that one of the biggest ways Christians fall short with "forgiveness" is by mistaking forgiveness with something else. He argues that often people don't really want God to forgive them; they want God to excuse them. We don't want God to say, "Yes, you have done this [terrible] thing but I accept your apology; I will ever hold it against you." We want God to say, "I see that you couldn't help it or didn't mean it; you weren't really to blame." Being excused, told that what you did is perfectly understandable and that you are actually ok, is actually the exact opposite of forgiveness. Forgiveness is saying that what one did was NOT ok, but is something that no longer comes in-between the relationship you have with the other person.

When we look to God to excuse us rather than forgive us, we are like that person going to the doctor, asking God to look at all the parts of us that are ok and ignoring the part that needs fixing. Lewis writes that it is all too easy in prayer to focus all our efforts on trying to explain ourselves to God (while justifying our action to ourselves). We can "go away imagining that we have repented and been forgiven when all that has really happened is that we have satisfied ourselves with our own excuses." We are not really forgiven, because we haven't asked for forgiveness.

Lewis goes on to write, that the same is true with the way we forgive one another. Our words and actions and even inaction sometimes hurt other people. But in these situations, most of us don't really want forgiveness... we want people to understand why we did what we did and excuse our behavior. Also, it is really hard for many of us to forgive some people in our lives, because we believe that we have to excuse what those other people have done to us. We believe that forgiveness means saying that what another did wasn't that bad. So we don't forgive. But Lewis writes, "Real forgiveness means looking steadily at the sin [someone else has committed against you], the sin that is left over without any excuses, after all allowances have been made, and seeing it in all its horror, dirt, meanness, and malice, and nevertheless becoming wholly reconciled to the person who has done it." It's not about excusing another's behavior it's forgiving it.

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JULY ELDERS

Faye Harrell
Larry Meek
Frank Suggs

HAPPY YEARS

July 20

(continued from previous page)

Forgiveness is super important. We desperately need it from God. But it is just as important that we ask for forgiveness and give forgiveness to one another. Jesus says in Matthew 6:15, “if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

I wonder what a church would look like that took forgiveness as seriously as it should be taken.

- Would the church intentionally teach people how to examine their hearts, get past all the excuses we make for ourselves, and get at what needs to actually be forgiven?
- During worship would that church periodically spend time during the Prayer of Confession to really give people the time to reflect on the sins from that week they need forgiveness from. Maybe they would have a page in the bulletin where people could write out the sins they needed forgiveness from and who they needed to seek out and forgive or ask forgiveness from next week.
- How would this church help individuals in the church who got mad at one another reconcile? How would the church session and pastor model the importance of forgiveness in their own interactions?

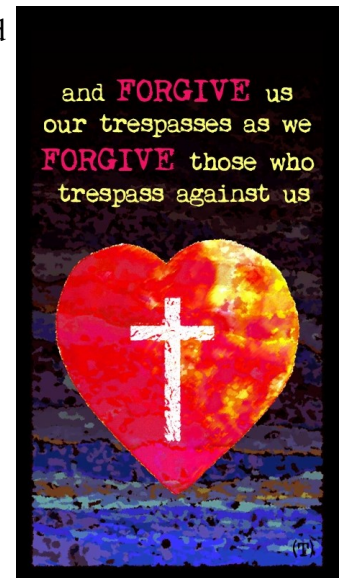
As many of you know, during the month of July, I will be on Sabbatical. Part of the point of a Sabbatical, is to give pastors time to recharge and help refocus on the specific needs and priorities of the church they serve. It is an opportunity to go out and see what is going on in other churches and be able to spend some quality time with their family. However, part of my Sabbatical this July will also be spent reading and reflecting on the works of C.S. Lewis. Specifically, I will be taking time to reflect on what a church that took C.S. Lewis’ writings seriously, might look like. What programs would a “C.S. Lewis Church” focus on? What priorities would this sort of church have? What would a “C.S. Lewis Church” invest its resources in? How would this kind of church reach its community?

I am excited for this month of exploration, rest, and vision casting! And I look forward to sharing some of what I’ve gleaned when I return! I hope that you will be praying for me and my family this month. Know that we will be praying for all of you as well. See you in August!

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor James

Worship in July

During the month of the July, Pastor James will be on Sabbatical. Worship and Commitment Committee wishes to thank everyone who has stepped up to help make worship happen while Pastor James is away. We appreciate everyone who has been involved in the planning of worship, who have helped coordinating volunteers, who have stepped up to preach, and who have volunteered to lead other elements of worship services. A special thank you to: Faye Harrell, Jennifer Nelson, Frank Suggs, Larry Meek, Susan Haney, Carol Beasley, Claire Cabral, Amanda Viola, Billy Jordan, Sally McGinnis, Junior Thompson, and Pastor James.



2022 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

What a wonderful time we had in VBS this year! There was lots of fun, good fellowship, great snacks and all the while we learned more about God's Word. A very special thank you to all you worked to set up, came faithfully to work with the children during the week, helped tear down and most of all, for your love and service to the children. *thank you!* We want to give a great big especially to Jennifer and Eric Nelson for their planning and coordination of this week of VBS.

Congratulations to all the kids for the monies raised in the service project....**over \$1000...**to go toward the ministry of Backpacks of Food.

****VBS PICTURES OF CHILDREN NOT INCLUDED I ON-LINE POSTING**

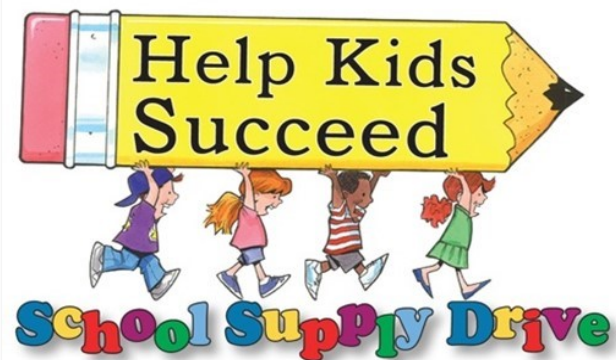
SCHOOL TOOLS



This year because school is starting 2 weeks early, we will begin our annual **SCHOOL TOOLS** collection through the month of **July**. We have a competition going on with Olney, New Hope & Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Churches. These supplies will go to New Hope, Beam, Bess and Robinson Elementary schools. If there is an over abundance of supplies, we also use some of ours for Forestview High School and/or the Blessing Box. Listed below are the items needed. Let's bless the children in Jesus' name and win the competition for goodness' sake!

Items Needed:

- Bottles of Hand Soap (to use with water)
- Subject Notebooks
- Pencil Boxes/Pouches
- Composition Notebooks
- Individual Pencil Sharpeners
- Jumbo Glue Sticks
- Colored Pencils (24 colors)
- Boxes of Crayola Crayons (24 count)
- Wooden #2 Pencils (no lead or mechanical pencils)
- Pencil Cap Erasers (bulk)
- Bottles of Pump Hand Sanitizer (60% & higher alcohol content)
- Children's Safety Scissors
- Yellow Highlighters
- Washable Markers (10 classic colors)
- 1' 3 -Ring Binder Notebooks
- 1 1/2" 3-Ring Binder Notebooks



****Please place items on the Missions Cart in the Gathering Area.****

Deadline: Sunday, August 7

UNION'S NEWS & EVENTS



THE HAPPY YEARS FELLOWSHIP

You are invited on **Wednesday, July 20 at 12 PM** for some great fellowship and a luncheon which is provided (donations accepted). The menu is cold sandwiches, potato salad, fixings, desserts and tea. Please come join us no matter what age you are.

ROCKIN' RALLY RETREAT

Mark your calendars. Coming on **Saturday, September 24th** from **2 - 7 PM** will be the church's retreat. There will be games for all ages both indoor & outdoor and a **FREE** hot dog supper. Be sure to tell your family, friends and neighbors....**IT'S COMING!**



SABBATICAL FOR PASTOR JAMES

During the **month of July**, Pastor James will be on Sabbatical. Each week, there will be an emergency pastoral contact who you can reach through one of the Elders serving on Session. Also please note that due to the Sabbatical, we will not be celebrating the Lords Supper during the month of July. Please keep Pastor James and his family in your prayers as he uses this time to recharge and prepare to come back to Union with a renewed sense of call and vision for the church.

If you have an emergency need for pastoral care, please contact one of the Elders on Session for the name and telephone number of the pastoral contact: Claire Cabral, Sally McGinnis, Tim Grigg, Billy Jordan, Sue Lewis, Charlie Nelson, Larry Meek, Faye Harrell, Jennifer Nelson, Frank Suggs, Tammy Biddix and Junior Thompson.

THANK YOU!

LADIES OF UNION CHURCH,

I want to thank you for the great honor you gave me at the Women's Birthday luncheon. This is so meaningful as the women in my family have supported the women's work for over 90 years. My grandmother, Addie Moore, was given this honor (I think) in 1952. It has been my pleasure in the past years to be part of this organization. You ladies are exceptional in your work for Christ. Thank you for the delicious meal - I shall wear the membership pin proudly and with great appreciation. - Diane Glenn



FINANCIAL NEWS May 2022

| | <u>May</u> | <u>Year to Date</u> |
|----------|---------------|---------------------|
| Revenue | \$17,386 | \$95,591 |
| Expenses | <u>17,323</u> | <u>93,728</u> |
| | 63 | 1,863 |

Loaves & Fishes donation to CAM - **\$725.22**
 Baby Bottle Campaign to CPC - **\$322.00**

Following are unexpected expenditures that impact our financial picture.

- January: repair exterior leak in the Sanctuary
Cost: \$6285
- April: digital music machine for Sanctuary
Cost: \$2854
- Fire & safety inspection
Cost: \$857

Please pray for our Church, Pastor James and our leaders as we work through the day to day operations of maintaining God's House.

Jason Morrison - Receiving Treasure
 Martha Simmons - Disbursing Treasurer

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



PRESBYTERIAN PRAYER CALENDAR & CONCERNS

Buladean
 217 Blevins Branch Road
 Bakersville, NC 28705

Burnsville First
 P.O. Box 635
 Burnsville, NC 28714

Calvary
 44 Circle Street
 Asheville, NC 28801

Canton
 P. O. Box 784
 Canton, NC 28716

Cherryville First
 107 West Academy Street
 Cherryville, NC 28021



- Prayers of protection and peace are encouraged for Frank Dimmock, Africa Partnership Liaison with The Outreach Foundation, as he leads a group through Ethiopia and has encountered civil unrest. Frank has ties to the Black Mountain/Montreat area and is a former PCUSA Mission Co-Worker. He is still actively involved with Nkhoma Hospital and our partnership with Malawi.
- Shelia Warthen, Commissioned Pastor at Ryburn Memorial, asks that you please remember Geraldine McClune in prayer. Ms. McClune is diabetic and suffering a bad open wound. She has been a faithful servant to their congregation and prayers are needed.
- Linda Hobson, wife of Honorably Retired Pastor Sam Hobson, asks for prayers as Sam recovers from open-heart surgery on June 13 at Mission Hospital to replace the aortic valve. They give thanks for a successful surgery and are comforted to know that a mighty cloud of prayer warriors continue to lift prayers for Sam and his complete recovery.



| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Pastor James is on sabbatical during the month of July. | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 3 11 AM 2:30 PM SOC | 4  | 5 6 PM B & G | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 11 AM W & C 2:30 PM W & S | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 12 PM Happy Years | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | Sunday 9AM Sunday School 10 AM Worship | Sunday 4 PM Kids of the Kingdom & Youth | |

Union Presbyterian Church

5615 Union Road
Gastonia, NC 28056
Phone: 704-864-7681
E-mail:
unionpc5615@gmail.com
www.unionpresbyterianchurch.com

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Return Service Requested

Reverend James Holeman
Pastor

Nancy Newman
Administrative Assistant

Jieeun Ha
Accompanist

Church Hours
9:00 AM—1:00 PM
Tuesday—Friday
Office Closed Monday and Saturday

SAVE THE DATES

August 21

Welcome Back Sunday &
Blessing of the Backpacks

September 16-17

Men's Beach Retreat

September 24

Rockin' Rally Retreat