



He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." -Revelation 21:5

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. -2 Corinthians 5:17

Dear friends and members of Union Presbyterian Church,

It's been a wonderful month Sabbatical for me and my family. It was a great time to be able to be with one another and grow closer together. It was an amazing opportunity to reflect and pray. It was wonderful to have the time to just sit down and read some books by and about C.S. Lewis that have been collecting dust on my shelf for years. I am so thankful for you all to allow me the time to "rest" in the Lord.

I have always loved Revelation 21:5, where Jesus says, "I am making everything new!" So much of the later chapters of Revelation are all about what is going to happen in the future. And yet Jesus' promise in this verse is in the present tense. Jesus is not saying, "Hey everyone, just wait some and eventually I am going to make everything new." Jesus says, "I AM making everything new!"

Experiencing something new often requires just a small change.

During my Sabbatical, our family got a new minivan. It has 4 wheels like our last car. It's got the same number of seats as our SUV. But it has a whole lot more leg room. It is also much easier to get to the back seats. The amount of bickering when we all travel together has dropped substantially. This small change has made traveling together a completely **NEW** experience for my family.

Experiencing something new sometimes just requires a change of perspective.

During Seminary, I read the book, "On the Incarnation," by Athanasius, a Greek bishop during the 4th century. The book is fine.... well actually, I don't really remember reading the book at all. I only know that I read it because of some of my notes I left written in the margins of the book. While studying C.S. Lewis at the Wade Center this month, I read something Lewis wrote in a letter to a friend, which sent me down a long rabbit hole that eventually led me back to the book "On the Incarnation." Understanding how influential the book was to Lewis, helped me understand what Athanasius was trying to explain about the Incarnation of Jesus in a different way. It was like reading a brand **NEW** book.

Experiencing something new sometimes just takes a little time to reflect.

Visiting different churches this last month was so much fun. I got to see a couple churches that friends attend or preach at. I got to see some churches that were trying to do something new or different. All of this of course led me to reflect on what we do during worship at Union. Of course, I got a couple new ideas to bring to our Worship & Commitment Committee. But mostly I was reminded about how important so many of the things we are already doing in worship are. When we begin to take for granted why we worship the way we do, worship can start to seem stale. I was able to look at some of our church's worship practices in a **NEW** way.

(continued on next page)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pastor 's Article continued Poem	2
Worship in August Sabbatical Thoughts Choir Party	3
Welcome Back Blessing of the Backpacks	4
Church News	5
Church Finances Celebrations PWNC Prayer List & Concerns	6
Church Calendar	7

AUGUST ELDERS

Tim Grigg
Billy Jordan
Sally McGinnis

COMMUNION

August 7

WELCOME BACK/ BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

August 21

STATED SESSION

August 21

(continued from previous page)

It's so easy isn't it? To look around and just see things getting worse or harder. It is easy to get discouraged. It is easy to just go through the motions of living and even the motions of faith. We look around and see churches dying, the number of faithful getting smaller, and the number of people sharing the way we look at life shrinking. We might ask ourselves, "What are we doing today?" And only respond, "Probably just a variation of what I did yesterday." Even our relationship with God can begin to feel discouraging. Let's go to church... because we always do. Let's sing that worship song again... because I guess it's a nice one. Let's pray for those people we know who need it.... even though we are a little suspicious that God is just going to do what he wants to anyway. But Jesus says, "I am making everything new." Instead we could saying:

-I know what I'm doing today... whatever the Holy Spirit leads me to! That's always a new adventure!

-Let's go to church... so God can speak to me again! Who knows what new thing he'll say!!

-Let's sing that song... because I can't help but sing praises about what new things God is doing in our midst!

-I've got to pray... because I just have so much new stuff I want praise God for and tell him about!

Jesus says, "I am making everything new!" Right now, he's making things new. Isn't that awesome!!

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor James

ALL THINGS BECOME NEW

Once born again, all things become new
and so I have listed for you just a few . . .

a new life and . . .

a new soul

a new spirit

a new heart

a new mind

a new plan

a new light

a new path

a new way

a new hope

a new joy

a new love

a new peace

a new kindness

a new faith

a new sight

a new patience

a new hearing

a new gentleness

a new meekness

a new temper

a new tongue

a new appetite

a new hunger

a new thirst

a new like

a new dislike and . . .

a new creature

Once born again all things become new
and now we are blessed with a heavenly view!

-A Poem by Deborah Ann Belka



WORSHIP IN AUGUST

Have you ever heard someone say that they thought that the God of the Old Testament seemed like a completely different being than the God of the New Testament? They might argue that the God of the Old seems more wrathful than the loving God of the New. Others argue that it's weird for Christians to spend so much time with the Old Testament since we believe in a Triune God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit don't even become a major part of Scripture until the Gospels.

This August we invite you to join us for a 5 week sermon series as we explore how the Holy Spirit connects to the Old Testament. In fact, in the Old Testament you can find all you need to understand what the Holy Spirit still does in and through God's people today. Join us as we celebrate together how the Holy Spirit can empower, lead, cleanse, transform, and restore!

Sermon Series: Foundations of the Spirit....

August 7: Numbers 11:16–31, “Foundations of the Spirit... Cooperation Makes it Happen”

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper

-Ephesians 4:7–13

August 14: Judges 6:33–7:8, “Foundation of the Spirit... Dressed to Impress?”

-Romans 12:1–3

August 21: Psalm 51, “Foundations of the Spirit... Cleanliness is Next to Godliness”

-Blessing of the Backpacks

-Titus 3:4–7

August 28: Ezekiel 36:16–32, “Foundations of the Spirit... Born to be Wild”

-John 3:1–8

September 4: Joel 2: 28–32, “Foundations of the Spirit... No Quick Patch-Up Here”

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper; Labor Day Weekend

-Acts 2:1–12

PASTOR JAMES' SABBATICAL THOUGHTS

In the months leading up to my Sabbatical (and during the Sabbatical itself) I had the opportunity to read over 30 books written by C.S. Lewis and over 20 books, articles, and dissertations about Lewis. It sounds like a lot but C.S. Lewis is my favorite Christian author so it really was a joy (and a bunch of what I was reading I had read before). Also as part of my Sabbatical I was able to go to the Wade Center at Wheaton College for several days. The Wade Center houses the largest collection of writings from C.S. Lewis in the world. What a treat! With so much Lewis being read and reread, I wanted something tangible to focus on as I read. And so I asked myself a question: If a church where to take the writings of C.S. Lewis and try to make the church match as closely as possible to Lewis' faith in Christ and understanding of what life in God looks like, what would need to change in that church? After all my reading I think that most churches Probably would need to change 5 things...



Wade Center at Wheaton College

Would you like to hear more? Pending Session approval, I hope to soon make a Sabbatical Presentation about what “**A C.S. Lewis Inspired Church**,” might look like. It could be held as early as the afternoon of **September 11!!** Keep an eye out for more details to come!

CHOIR PARTY & MEETING

At **2:30pm on Sunday, August 28th** we invite all old choir members, young choir members, long-time members, and potential new members to join us together to party and talk about the choir program for the coming year! We invite you to bring a treat to share and come ready to enjoy some quality time together!!



Dear Friends & Members of Union,

We pray you and your family are doing well!

This letter is an invitation to our **Welcome Back Sunday** on **August 21** at **10 AM**.

We would be honored if you will be a part of this very special Sunday. On this day also will be our annual **Blessing of the Backpacks** where we invite students of all ages to bring their backpacks to church. We will take time during worship to commission our students, teachers, teacher assistants, school employees/volunteers, parents, grandparents and other care givers.

Following the service that morning, we will have a reception in the Gathering Area with refreshments. We know that the last few years have been difficult for families, communities and for the church. We are looking forward to start this new school year right, filled with God's hope and joy!

We hope you will put this date on your calendar and join us on this Sunday as well as others in the days and weeks ahead.

Sincerely in Christ,

The Strengthening of the Church Committee
Union Presbyterian Church



UNION NEWS & EVENTS



SCHOOL TOOLS -ENDS AUGUST 7

There is still an opportunity to donate school supplies until **August 7**. A list of items is available on our website (July newsletter) if you need to see what is needed to bless those in our community who need help.

Recommendation
For
Church Officers



"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all persons." -1 Corinthians 12:4-6

ELECTION OF ELDERS

The **Nominating Committee** is charged with the responsibility of nominating a slate of Elders to serve on session. The slate is presented to the congregation for election. Your participation by prayerfully suggesting qualified candidates is essential. Candidates for the office should be suggested according to their God-given gifts. Located at the main entrance in front of the Rotunda table are form that give you the opportunity to submit some names for consideration. We will be receiving these suggestions through **August 14**.

THE HAPPY YEARS FELLOWSHIP

Please join us no matter what your age for a great lunch of hot dogs, hamburgers, fixins' and desserts on **Wednesday, August 17 at 12 PM**. The food is always delicious and the fellowship is great!



WITNESS & SERVICE LUNCHEON

Witness & Service Committee invite you to a luncheon on **Sunday, August 21**, immediately following worship. The menu will be salad, spaghetti, garlic bread, desserts and tea. Your donations for this luncheon will go to purchase items for the **Blessing Box**. Come and enjoy a good lunch and great fellowship while helping to support a much needed ministry in our community.

YOUTH BUILDING CLEAN OUT

On **Saturday, August 27 at 8 AM** we will be cleaning out the Youth Building. Anyone who is concerned about items they have in the building needs to come before or on that day to remove the items. We hope to have representation from the Youth, the Women of the Church and the Men of the Church on **August 27**, plus a bunch of extra helpful hands, as Building & Grounds finishes cleaning out and begins organizing the Youth Building. Thank you for your help!

ROCKIN' RALLY RETREAT - SEPTEMBER 24!

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.





FINANCIAL NEWS June 2022

	<u>June</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Revenue	\$13,944	\$109,534
Expenses	<u>15,756</u>	<u>109,484</u>
	-1,812	50

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



PRESBYTERIAN

Cherryville First
107 West Academy Street
Cherryville, NC 28021

Clinchfield
87 Greenwood Drive
Marion, NC 28752

Columbus
21 Peniel Road
Columbus, NC 28722

Conley Memorial
13853 US 221 North
Marion, NC 28752



- Prayers are appreciated for Daniel Tipton, minister member of Presbytery and Grief Services Director for Four Seasons Compassion for Life, as he awaits news about a potential heart transplant.
- Carole Ball shares the following update: I came through the surgery well; however, I will likely be having another surgery in the not too distant future. I am grateful to God and give thanks for all the love and prayers from those in the Presbytery during this time. (Carole is a member of Trinity Presbyterian in Hendersonville and an active member of PWNC's Guatemala Education Team. (She was diagnosed with cancer and underwent surgery on May 27.)
- 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.
- Continue to remember our General Presbyter, Byron Wade, following surgery for prostate cancer. He received a good report from his lab results and will undergo testing again in late August.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 10 AM Bible Study 6 PM B & G	3	4 6 PM C & T	5	6
7 COMMUNION 2:30 PM SOC	8	9 10 AM Bible Study	10	11	12	13
	PASTOR ON VACATION					
14 8 AM W & C 11 AM Session with the Confirmation Class	15	16 10 AM Bible Study	17 12 PM Happy Years	18	19	20
21 Welcome Back Sunday Blessing of the Backpacks W & S Luncheon 2:30 PM Stated Session	22	23 10 AM Bible Study	24	25	26	27 8AM Youth Building Cleanout
28 2:30 PM Choir Party	29	30 10 AM Bible Study	31		<u>Sunday</u> 9AM Sunday School 10 AM Worship	<u>Sunday</u> 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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 8
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
Witness & Service Luncheon

September 16-17
September 24

Men's Beach Retreat
Rockin' Rally Retreat