

JANUARY 2025

MT HOPE MESSENGER

MT. HOPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
OFFICE HOURS: M, W, & F (8AM - 3PM)



2400 Mt. Hope Church Road
Whitsett, NC 27377

Pastor: Rev. Kristin Gerner Vaughn
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Administrative Assistant & Digital
Technology - Lorie Arrington
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Director of Youth & Children Ministry &
Music Director
Julianna Pierdomenico
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Accompanist - Ekin Üstünel

Consistory President - Gloria Apple

Board of Christian Education - Susan
Finley



Sunday for Worship
at 10:00 am



Pastor's Note



“A New Bright Star”

I am sure I could get an, “Amen!” from some of you about leaving 2024 behind and beginning anew with the start of another year. Good riddance, to all the negativity, the sickness, sorrow and pain. Surely 2025 will be a better year.

I have come to think of the years, not as good or bad, but as my new desk in the classroom of God’s teachings. If something good happens I don’t think God gave it to me because I deserved it, anymore than I believe that pain and suffering came to me or my family because I deserved it. I don’t think God works that way. However, there do seem to be seasons in my life where I am asked to learn the same lessons over and over again, as if it is going to take many tutoring sessions between me and God’s divine discernment before I will pass this test. It is at moments like that that I know I am sitting at a new desk and I have many lessons to complete before I can call myself proficient at this lesson.

Every year, the first Sunday of January we are issued a star word at church. A huge thanks to Ava for decorating those stars for us. They are beautiful works of art. In the middle of each wooden, plain star, is a word. The past two years those words have become my new school desk. This past year I was given the word, “trust.” I sure have set at that desk a many a time learning how to lay it all down at the foot of Jesus, learning how to trust in ways, that even though uncomfortable at times, has been a welcomed sense of growth. I have meditated on that word every day for a year. It is pretty amazing what God can do when you sit and think about the same thing for a full year. Let’s just say, when it came time to exercise a deep sense of trust, I was more prepared to do so than I would have been if I hadn’t been working on the assignment. We will be passing the stars out again this year on January 5th during 10:00 am worship.

Whether you are looking forward to the end of 2024 and ready for a new start or you are still holding on to 2024 because you just resist change that much here is a prayer for you. A prayer for the closing of one year and the opening of another:

God our stories are strewn with reminders of Your sustaining grace...the nudge of a direction when we felt lost. The unexpected comfort when we felt broken. The unforeseen door opening for a dream bigger than our fear. The transformation of ordinary days into holy ground. Because of where we’ve been, but mostly because of who You are, may we live in trust today and in all the days to come. Amen. (a prayer written by Peggy Haymes for worship)

When the stars have been stilled, when the star-topped tree is taken down,
When family and friends are gone home, when we are back to our schedules

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS BEGINS

To welcome the refugee, to heal a broken planet, to feed the hungry

To build bridges of trust, not walls of fear, to share our gifts

To seek justice and peace for all people, to bring Christ’s light to the world

May your star shine bright in 2025 with courage and trust!

Pastor Kristin





The Garden Club will not be meeting in January.

Women's Fellowship January 14th



Women's Fellowship on January 14 6:30 pm.
New Fellowship Hall. We will begin our study of
Velvet Elvis. Repainting the Christian Faith.
Women who have not participated in Women's
Fellowship are more than welcome to join us.

Being an Elvis fan is not required.
Your fearless leader, Marcia.

HAPPY new YEAR

IMPORTANT SAVE THE DATES

- ~Mission Be the Church - Medicine bottles will be distributed for Mustard Seed Clinic 1/5
- ~ Medicine bottles collected 1/26
- ~ All Birthday's Celebration dinner @ 6pm NFH
- ~ Valentine's Dinner Saturday 2/15
- ~ Bingo! Friday 2/28 at 6pm



Please join us on
Monday, January 6th,
at 6:00 to take down
the Christmas
decorations
in the church. This
isn't as much fun as
putting them up but it
goes a lot faster! We
could use all the help
we can get! Thank you!

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

JAN
5

NO MEETING

Enjoy the final day of
break!

JAN
12

PREP MEETING FOR MLK WEEKEND

Meet at 12pm in the
youth room.

JAN
17, 18, 19

BLOWING ROCK

More details to come.

JAN
26

YOUTH COUNCIL MEETING

Meet at 12pm to discuss
prep for Valentine's Dinner
and bingo.

Reminder: Youth meetings will now
happen at 12pm on Sundays.

Mt Hope United Church of Christ

Consistory Minutes 11/14/2024

Members Present: Gloria Apple, Dave Blakesley, Tammy Holt, Dora Moore, Sharon Mims, Tracy Buff, Sylvia Belvin, Bob Hamlett, Don Kirkman

The meeting was called to order by Gloria Apple, a quorum was established, and all were welcomed.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

A devotional provided by Tammy Holt focused on the joy that comes from Christ and how this joy can transcend our circumstances and bring us strength.

We Celebrate our Past

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Tracy Buff to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2024, consistory meeting. Tammy Holt seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

October 2024 financial report was presented with an ending balance of \$169,820.18. October Consolidated Fund Activity receipts of \$21,644.81 and Disbursements of \$29,588.31 were reported. A motion was made by Tracy Buff and seconded by Bob Hamlett to approve the report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report (presented by Gloria Apple)

Those participating in the confirmation class will be joining the church on Sunday, November 24th. This group includes Jonathan Vaughn, Emma Vaughn, Lillie Honey, Anna Korman, Kathryn Vaughn, and Grayson Scott. The motion was made by Sylvia Belvin and seconded by Bob Hamlett to accept these individuals as members of Mt. Hope UCC. Motion carried.

William and Emily Smith Crumby are seeking baptism for their child with a possible December or January baptism date. Tracy Buff made the motion to accept this request and it was seconded by Don Kirkman. Motion carried.

Ideas are being sought on how the church might provide a Food Pantry to the surrounding community. Someone who is willing to coordinate activities for this mission is needed.

Committee Reports

Board of Christian Education

Maintenance and Trustees

Work continues to replace any needed toilet kits

Stewardship

Historical

Ongoing work

Mission & Outreach

Music & Worship

Holiday Activities: Church will be decorated on Monday, 11/25/24 at 6:00pm

12/8 Children's Pageant, 12/15 Caroling, 12/18 Blue Christmas Service, 12/24 Christmas Eve Service and luminaries (need milk jugs), 12/29

casual service with a meal being planned

Social Concerns

Communications

WISE Team

Speaker on Caregiving during Gather Learn and Grow

Fellowship Committee

Personnel

Prayer of Intercession

Tracy Buff led prayers for those in need in the church and our community.

Old Business

-Driveway repair: Don Kirkman-work in progress

-Ceiling repair: Seeking bids for repair

-Smoke Detectors and Fire Suppressors: ongoing

-Fan in church office: will be installed

-Painting in parlor: ongoing issue needing further investigation for cause of stain

-Church Usage policy- tabled until later

New Business

-Plans were discussed for the Consistory/Staff Christmas Dinner. Gloria Apple will follow-up with available options. Plans to provide staff bonuses and provide options for congregation to contribute were also discussed.

-A more economical option for the playground port-a-potty has been found and will be used beginning in the near future.

-A need for heat in the sanctuary during choir rehearsals was discussed. It was suggested that exploration of maintaining a more constant temperature be done.

Charge and Benediction

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Mims



Wise Moment



Thanks to all who helped with the Blue Christmas Service of Light on December 18th.

It was such a sweet heartfelt service with around 40 church members gathering for a night of tea and stories around a candlelit table with beautiful music provided by Tammy Holt, Lisa Sinclair, Ekin Üstünel, Andrew Beach and Juliana Pierdomenico.

On January 19th at 3:30 PM, we look forward to our first puddle club gathering of the New Year focusing on self-care with mindful yoga and beauty treatments as we delve into scripture within The Book of Esther. We all are companions on a journey, join us!



Mt. Hope Quilters



A big shout out to the quilting ladies, Cynthia Morris, Mary Catherine Moser, & Cindy Hyle, who raised a lot of money for just 3 ladies! They gave over \$800 between Mt. Hope Fire Department toy drive and Project Christmas - which is a non-profit assisting children in McDowell County with Christmas. Due to the hurricane the number of children were much higher this year. We are proud to have these ladies as a part of the church and thank you to those that made purchases as well! Congratulate them when you see them!



WISE in the WORLD...

Mt. Hope has been blessed with a WISE team to grow the understanding of mental health within our congregation. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has reached out to one of our own to coordinate a community inclusive grant in Guilford County. The purpose of the grant is to create safe places to support our friends with mental illness concerns making them feel included in the community and experience joys in life. Connie Blakesley will be partnering with Non-profit, State, County and Local organizations to offer a Mindful Care Toolkit. There will be FREE classes in Greensboro for yoga, junk journaling, walking, birding, herb container gardening and cooking in the coming New Year. Everyone is invited to attend, bring a friend and help support activities which will continue to reduce stress and bring joy to the world beyond...

Happy Birthday!

Come join us for a birthday celebration for Mary Catherine right after church on Sunday, January 12th. During coffee time, between worship and Gather. Learn. Grow., we will celebrate Mary Catherine's 98th birthday with cake and cards. **You bring the cards**, the church will provide the cake.



January 2025 Mission: Be the Church

Please join us as we participate in the Medicine Bottle Campaign for Mustard Seed Community Health.



BE THE CHANGE

Help fill our medicine bottles with coins, cash and checks!

The money raised from Mustard Seed Community Health's bottle campaign helps provide primary, holistic healthcare to Guilford County neighbors that are without health insurance or are underinsured, underserved and living below the poverty level.

The Medicine Bottles for Mustard Seed Campaign provides healthcare services to individuals of all ages, newborns to senior citizens.

We will have the medicine bottles for distribution during worship on Sunday, January 5. We will collect the bottles during worship on Sunday, January 26, UCC Health & Human Service Sunday. If you are unable to join us on Sunday, January 26, please drop off your medicine bottles in the church office sometime January 20-24.



Thank you to Lisa Moser for leading the volunteers to provide the residents at Alamance Plaza a meal on Thanksgiving Day.

Thank you to all who donated items also.

Thank You

Blessed are the members of the Mt. Hope United Church of Christ. Thank you for all the food you have provided for us over the past month. It was delicious and kept us healthy as we worked to regain our strength since Mike's surgery. We appreciate everyone of you and have felt your love. We ask for your continued prayers as we move forward. Thank you for your kindness and thoughtfulness this past month.

Mike & Barb Vaughn



Thank you to all the angels who donated gifts to our angel tree this year.

As always you went above and beyond to help families at Nat. Greene and in our community.

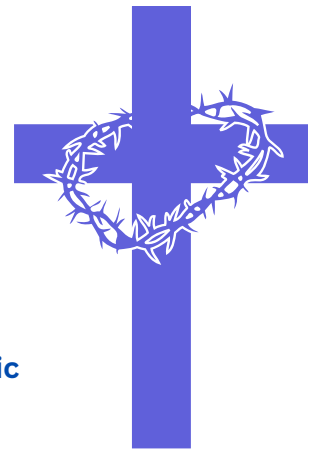
Merry Christmas!

Thank you

Thank you for the cards and food upon the passing of our mom, Mary Ellis. Our family greatly appreciated it.

Don, Janet Ellis & family

January



- 1st - HAPPY NEW YEAR
- 5th - Worship at 10 am - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 - No Youth
- 5th - Mission Be the Church - distribute medicine bottles for Mustard Seed Clinic
- 8th - Choir Practice at 7 pm
- 12th - Worship at 10 am - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 - Youth @ 12 pm
- 12th - Celebrate Mary Catherine's 98th birthday after worship w/cake & cards.
- 14th - Women's Fellowship @ 6:30 - Begin study of Velvet Elvis - all welcome
- 15th - Choir practice at 7 pm
- 17th - 19th Youth will be in Blowing Rock
- 19th - Worship at 10 am - Gather Learn Grow at 11:15 am
- 19th - Puddle Club @ 3:30 pm - Self Care Event
- 21st - Friends & Neighbors 10:30 am - NFH
- 21st - WISE Meeting @ 5:30 pm in Gathering Room
- 22nd - Choir Practice at 7 pm
- 24th - Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm
- 26th - Worship at 10 am - Gather Learn Grow @ 11:15 am - Youth @ 12 pm
- 26th - Board of Christian Education meeting at 12pm in Conf. Room
- 26th - Youth Council Meeting at 12 pm
- 26th - Medicine bottles for Mustard Seed Clinic turned in.
- 26th - Birthday Celebration in NFH @ 6pm for all birthdays for the year!
- 29th - Choir practice at 7 pm

Faith
Hope
Love

*Yoga on Monday and Thursday in the NFH at 5:30 pm each week.

*Please know every is welcome to attend any event.

*We love to have you bring a friend or invite your neighbor! Share his word!



Happy Anniversary

Harden and Harriett Phipps 1/20
Jeff & Janet Welker 1/23



- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 2nd David Prater
Marie Linnens | 14th Rebecca Levens
Kayla Oehling |
| 3rd Heather Greeson | 24th Lillie Honey |
| 4th Peggy Greeson | 30th Claire Smith |
| 7th Bill Kotis
Pat Branson
Roger Neese
Mikayla Stevens | |
| 11th Lisa Moser | |
| 12th Mary Catherine Moser
Cathy Turner | |
| 13th Addison Clark | |



Prayer Concerns

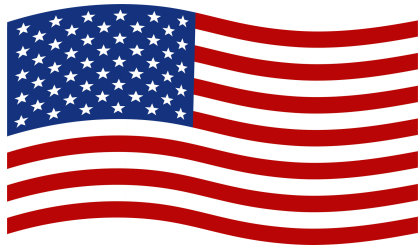
Health Care Center

Alamance House - R. Denny Ingold (#305)

Clapp's Nursing Center - Robert Ingold (#801)

Clapp's Nursing Center - John Maurice Greeson (#208)

Blumenthal Health & Rehab Center - Harold Reece, Jr.



Mt. Hope Military Connections

Michael Terraforte

Solomon Price, Jr.

Kyle Gerner

Scott Amick

Members, Friends, & Relatives

Joan May

Steve Burns

Woody & Peggy Levens

Noral & Cindy Belvin

Cindy Hamlett

Israel and Gaza

Ray Neese, Jr.

Libby Lowdermilk

Brian Smith

Amanda Levens

Peggy Greeson

Cathy Turner

Shirley Kime

Helen Johnson

Jayne Brown

Martha & Bug Whitesell

Linda Neese

Nell Saxton

Clifton Greeson

Betty Kime

Maurice Greeson

Beth Crews

Robert Roth

Tom Payne

Christina Oliver

Debra Prater

Western NC

Jean Covington Causey

Angela Burke

Cheryl Royal

Family of Keria Tapia

Ann Underwood

Dave & Debbie

Roger Smith

Ava Straughn

Morty Mortenson

Jordan (Marcia's)

Lynda Welker

Marilyn Consaul

Carla Moore

Jackie

Kathy Harrison

Janet Cannon

David Neal

Baby Otto

Rena Swaim

Lisa Moser

Gary Strader

Sheila Foster

Michelle Korman

Jim Peters

Beth Harris

Robert Miller

Rod Moore

Sawyer Kimbro

Family of Johnny Ely

Sophia Levens

Family of Curtis Kellam

Mike & Barb Vaughn

Family of Bill Welker

Mike, Kristin, & family