



Love in Action

The Newsletter of Maggie Valley United Methodist Church

Volume 16, Issue 10

October, 2023

God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good! (Genesis 1:31 The Message)

We are about to enter one of the most spectacular times of year in the mountains: fall and the changing of the leaves. Our roadways will swell with visitors who will travel for hours and even days to take in the magnificent colors and beauty that sits right beside those of us who are blessed to call these hills our home.

This is the time of year when it is easiest (at least for me) to see the splendor, wonder, the glory of God's creation — that creation that God called in Genesis 1:31, "so very good!" I have a lofty goal this year, though. My hope is that I can (and maybe you can too) use this time of year as an opportunity to recalibrate my mind and spirit to see that every season, every creature, all of what God has created is so very good.

On October 8th and 15th I will be preaching a mini-series on "Beauty." During these two weeks, we should have no trouble visualizing the beauty of God's creation. But I hope that as the leaves fall from the trees and we enter the winter, "barren" months, that we can develop habits of giving thanks for all the seasons, all the weather, all the gifts of the world around us.

Indeed, all around us is incredible beauty. Barbara Brown Taylor talks about this in her book *An Altar in the World*. She says, "Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars." I love the imagery Taylor elicits, that every step we take has the possibility of the Divine in it. Every cove and valley, every mountain-top and back-woods holler is covered with the fingerprints of the Sacred.

If God is everywhere around us, then why don't we see that more often? If as Taylor imagines, we ought to be "cracking our shins" on altars all around us, why don't I feel more bruised up? Why don't I notice every day as what it is: pure gift?

John O'Donohue writes, "When our eyes are graced with wonder, the world reveals its wonders to us. There are people who see only dullness in the world and that is because their eyes have already been dulled. So much depends on how we look at things. The quality of our looking determines what we come to see" (*Beauty: The Invisible Embrace*). I wonder how my eyes have been dulled to all that is around me. I wonder when it happened and how I let it happen. Why did I stop noticing the miracle of the sun each new morning? Why have I stopped praising that the moon rises again each evening? And perhaps most importantly, how can I renew my sense of wonder and awe in the beauty all around?

The first Sunday we think about "beauty," I will encourage us to drop the cataracts of dullness to all that is right in front of us. There are many scriptures that encourage us to give thanks for all of God's creation — to soak it up and breathe it in. The second Sunday in this mini-series will continue in that vein, but I will encourage us all to not just observe beauty for ourselves, but be part of preserving and conserving the beauty all around us.

As you undoubtedly know, God created humans with a special privilege, a special job. We are to be care-takers of this world that God looked on and called so very good. We have been given all the tools we need to steward this creation. But we have not done a good job of that. My hope is that the more I notice and appreciate the beauty all around, the more I will be compelled to act so that nothing destroys it, not even myself.

Let me leave you with these familiar words:
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
 Praise God all creatures here below,
 Praise God above ye heavenly hosts,
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

The words from the doxology that we sing each week hint at a great encouragement for me as we venture into beauty:

we are not alone. As we praise God we do so with *all* creatures on earth (not to mention the heavenly hosts above). To fully open ourselves to the beauty that is within and around each of us, we will need each other. We will need to learn from one another. We will need ALL of creation to teach us and to work with us. And we are not alone.

O Lord, open me to the beauty that is all around. Awaken in me a spirit of wonder and awe for all that you have so wonderfully created. Inspire me with your wild and on-the-loose Spirit to act with love for all of creation.

Grace & Peace,
 Pastor Cole

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE...

United Methodist Churches take membership vows and church membership very seriously. Every name listed on our membership rolls represent a person important to Jesus Christ and important to the church - they are part of our family.

While *The United Book of Discipline* outlines a lengthy process for removing members, it also calls for the entire membership of a church to be engaged in contacting members. The section "Care of Members" (*2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶1228) outlines the importance of this: "The



Church has a moral and spiritual obligation to nurture its nonparticipating and indifferent members and to lead them into an active church membership."

An annual membership audit is required by *The Discipline*. The pastor is responsible for ensuring that all membership records are accurate and up-to-date (*2016 Book of Discipline*, ¶231). We will begin our semi-annual audit this year and it will continue through 2025. For 2 years, we will mail a letter to those listed on our membership role that we haven't seen for a while. Members will be able to return a form to indicate if they wish to remain a member or they can indicate if they are worshipping somewhere else or would like to be removed. Those that we do not hear from in the next 2 years will be removed from the membership role at Charge Conference in the fall of 2025.

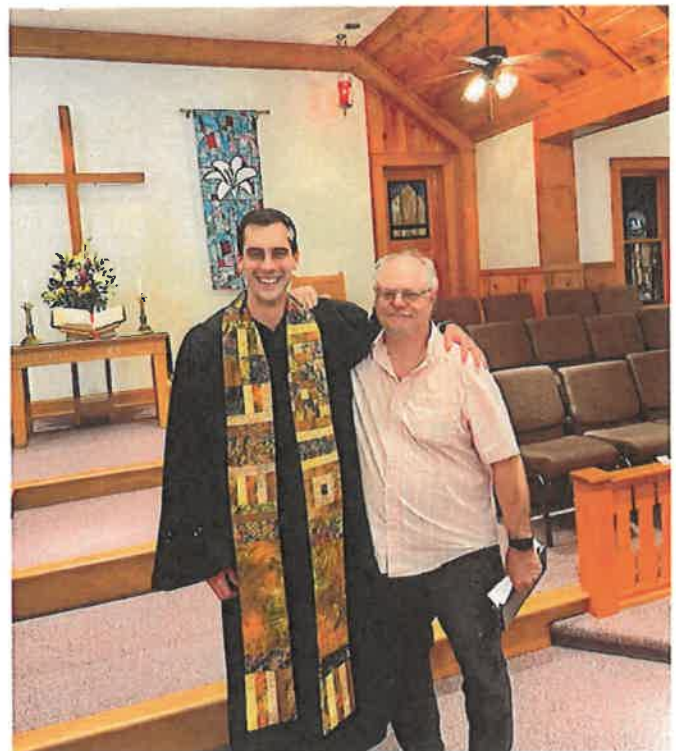
Our deep hope is that when people receive this letter (or perhaps a call from YOU if you've noticed someone hasn't been to church in a while), they will re-engage with the MVUMC community. God is doing something amazing in and through this community. Each of you is needed. We have a responsibility to keep accurate records, but we hope this audit will ultimately lead to more folks involved in the life-changing ministry that God is empowering us to be part of in Maggie Valley and beyond.

If you have any questions, please contact Belinda Marr or Pastor Cole.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS(Starting left): Clay & Jan Wagner, Eric, Minnie, & Lucy McGuirt, Ruth Smith, Rick Stillwell

NOT PICTURED: Ron & Doris Lewis, Judy Sutton



PRAYER CONCERNS...

Our Congregational Care Group meets once a month to update the list. The list will change monthly. If you know someone who needs to be added to the list or needs to remain on the list more than a month, please contact Belinda. Please pray for those below and send them a card if you would like to.

General Prayers:

Lucia Amerelli, Steve Baden, Donna Brailsford, John Burton, Stetson Cooper, Grace Heger, Bob Humphrey, Holt Isom, Destiny Little, Caroline Miller, The Family of Scott Muse, Wanda Ann Kinnamon's Mother, Detra Loadholt, Jim Neely, Georgia Painter, Frank Senatore, Cindy Smith, Juanita Stines, Daneeta's son.



Congregational Care Team

Those in hospital and/or surgeries:

Mike Simon (Ohio)

Homebound/Nursing Home:

Becky Bender, Lady Hughes, Paul White- Maggie Valley Nursing & Rehab, Gail Pace- Silver Bluff, Phyllis Jackson, Polly Solley- Smoky Mtn Nursing Home, Clarissa Fisher-Florida
Kathryn Brannen, Willard Dockery, Joe & Helen Duke, Brenda Griswold, Jeanette Miller, Dave Pickens, Leon Roach, Ron Sellers, David Wagner



This month please be in prayer for all those who have been impacted by severe weather. We pray that their recovery may be full of hope. May all those who are in need, are hurting, or may be feeling lost have their every need met.

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER...

Gracious and loving God, send your Holy Spirit to Maggie Valley United Methodist Church. Open us to the fresh blowing of your Holy Wind. Let our coming and going, our serving and sitting, our hoping and loving be full of your grace. Let us be a sign of hope, joy and love to all in this community. Enliven us again, O great God. We ask you to breakthrough in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

October

2023

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	2 Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	3 "Sacred Seeing" (7:30am) — Parking Lot	4 Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	5 Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall UMW (2pm) — Fellowship Hall WCU Wesley Foundation Meal (4pm)	6	7
8 Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	9 Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	10 In God's Creation Hike (9am) — Parking Lot	11 Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	12 Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	13	14 Blessing of the Animals (10-12) — Church Backyard
15 Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	16 Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	17 One Board Meeting (6pm) — Fellowship Hall	18 Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	19 Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall Men's Group (5:30pm) — Grace Classroom	20	21
22 Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	23 Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	24	25 Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	26 NO PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY	27	28 Men's Breakfast (8am) — Fellowship Hall Trunk or Treat (3-5) Parking Lot
29 Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	30 Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	31	1 Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	2 Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	3	4 Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall

ANNOUNCEMENTS...

Our Church Food Pantry operates on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 am until noon. We are asking that everyone in the congregation **bring INSTANT OATS, JELLY, 64oz JUICE, CRACKERS, BEEF RAMEN NOODLES, SHAMPOO, and TOOTHPASTE this month.** Personal hygiene items are appreciated also. **We are also in need of PLASTIC GROCERY bags.** Thank you for helping!

The One Board will meet on Tuesday, October 17th at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

All "Love in Action" articles for November are due to Belinda by Thursday, October 19th.

The Men's Group WILL meet on Thursday, October 19th and will have the Men's breakfast on Saturday, October 28th at 8:00am in the fellowship hall. All men are invited.

Pastor Cole's Bible Study will not meet Thursday, October 26th.

"Sacred Seeing" is a way of seeing the world with the eyes of the heart. If I'm being honest, that sounds like something that may be hard to do or only for "really spiritual" people (whatever that means), but it's a practice I hope we can all try! **We will meet on October 3rd at 7:30am in the Fellowship Hall.**

The UMW Grace Circle meeting will meet on Thursday, October 5th at 2:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome!

Those interested in helping with the Wesley Foundation Meal for the Western Carolina University Students on Thursday, October 5th, please contact Wanda Messer at 828-734-7848.

Fall 2023 Wednesday Night Spiritual Growth Group will meet beginning September 27th for 8 weeks from 6-7pm in the Grace Classroom. They are viewing and reacting to "The Chosen." **We will have "movie night" for the next 8 weeks so please join us.** Participant books are available for \$15.

This year's date for the **Holiday Boutique is Saturday, December 2nd. October 1st,** we will begin accepting donations of new or slightly used men and women's clothing, handbags, shoes, jewelry, scarfs, Christmas, and nice gift items. Please do not bring clothes that are stained. If you can bring clothing on hangers or folded that would be a huge help and greatly appreciated. This is an important mission here at Maggie Valley UMC with proceeds going to our food ministries. Last year the boutique raised over \$8,000. The money was given to the Shepherd's Table and the Food Pantry. Please contact Judi Ferris at 828.734.0156 or Pastor Cole for any questions.

Pastor Mike & Sue Shirley invite you to join them for Connections Sunday School Class. We will meet every Sunday at 9:00 am in the Grace Classroom. Bring a Bible and join us! All are welcome!

The Grace Sunday School Class will meet on Fridays at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

"In God's Creation Hike" will hike Pink Beds on Tuesday, October 10th, leaving church at 9:00am. We will be taking the van. It is a loop hike that is relatively flat next to a stream in the woods. You'll want to bring plenty of water, snacks, rain gear and lunch. We will picnic at the picnic area and fellowship there before we head back. We will also take in Moore Cove Falls. This is a delightful, beautiful walk-through fern filled woods to the 50ft. falls. A must see! All are welcome to join the fun. Contact Judi Ferris 828.734.0156 or Pastor Cole.

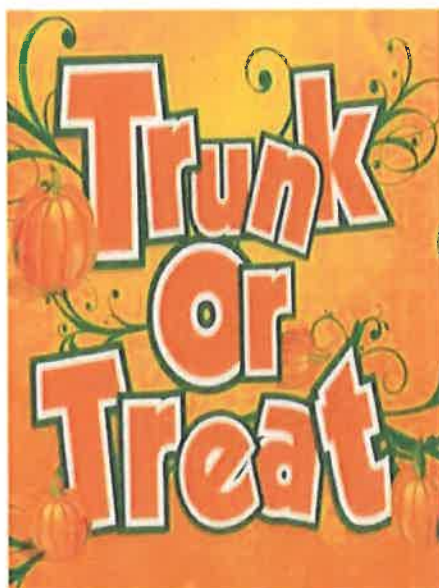
BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS...

The Blessing of the Animals is a tradition that stretches back some 800 years to St. Francis of Assisi. He is attributed with saying: "Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join [humanity] in praising God." Praying for and blessing the animals that give so much joy and love to our lives is not just something "cute" to do — it is being faithful to the task God has given us as humans!

Join us on October 14th anytime between 10am-12pm out by the barn. All (non-venomous, please) pets are welcome!



TRUNK OR TREAT FUN...



This year we will be hosting Trunk or Treat on Saturday, **October 28th from 3pm-5pm** in the church parking lot.

To make this a wonderful event for our community, we need YOU! We need the following things:

- Bags of **individually wrapped candy** (You can drop these off at the church office or on Sundays during worship.)
- Volunteers to help during the event on **October 28th**. We will begin organizing and decorating car trunks at 2:00. Feel free to dress in costume! Also, bring a few extra bags of candy for your car just in case we run short.

If you can help, please contact the church office, Pastor Cole or call or text Wanda Messer (734-7848). Thanks ahead of time for being a celebration of love to our community!

BELINDA MARR, TREASURER'S REPORT...
 Monthly Financial Report for AUGUST 2023



**Treasurer
 Report**

AUGUST		
Needed for Budget	\$	\$23,882.98
Expenses	\$	\$27,858.24
Offerings	\$	\$27,322.25
Over/Under	\$	(\$535.99)

THANK YOU'S...

*Dear Maggie Valley UMC Family,
 I wanted to thank you so much for the beautiful ornament that you gave to me. It is such a special remembrance of Maggie Valley UMC. I will cherish it always. I appreciate your kindness and your remembrance of me.*

*Love to all,
 Janice Rogers*

"The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others." — DeAnn Hollis. A BIG THANK YOU to everyone involved in making the September barn sale a success! What an amazing group of caring and hardworking volunteers! 🍷

Barb Planchock

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES...

HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS!

2	Katie Muirhead Hermida	16	Donny Wall
4	Cheryl Little	17	Eli Bennett
5	Stacey Boris	20	Betty Ferguson
8	Cliff Peebles	21	Elizabeth Colborne
8	Sharon Ross	24	Rhonda Smith
9	Mike Brosius	25	Stephanie Love
9	Penelope Standley	26	Destiny Little
10	Susan Plott	26	Tori Swinford
12	Robert Damico	27	Barbara Briggs
13	David Wagner	27	Ella Sutton
14	Emily Ferguson	27	Brenton Yadon
14	Eric McGuirt	28	LaDonna Rollins
15	Hazel Bradshaw	30	Trudy Brosius
15	Irene Rollar	31	Katherine Cabe
16	JP Smith	31	Sherri Mauch
16	Jon Snyder		

HAPPY OCTOBER ANNIVERSARY!

1	Steve & Helen Dickinson (1976)
2	Joan & Glen Rose
11	Tyla & Jason Moody (1997)
17	Beth & Ken Brown (1998)
26	Trudy & Jerry Hall (2013)
26	Mary & Doug Sisk (1968)



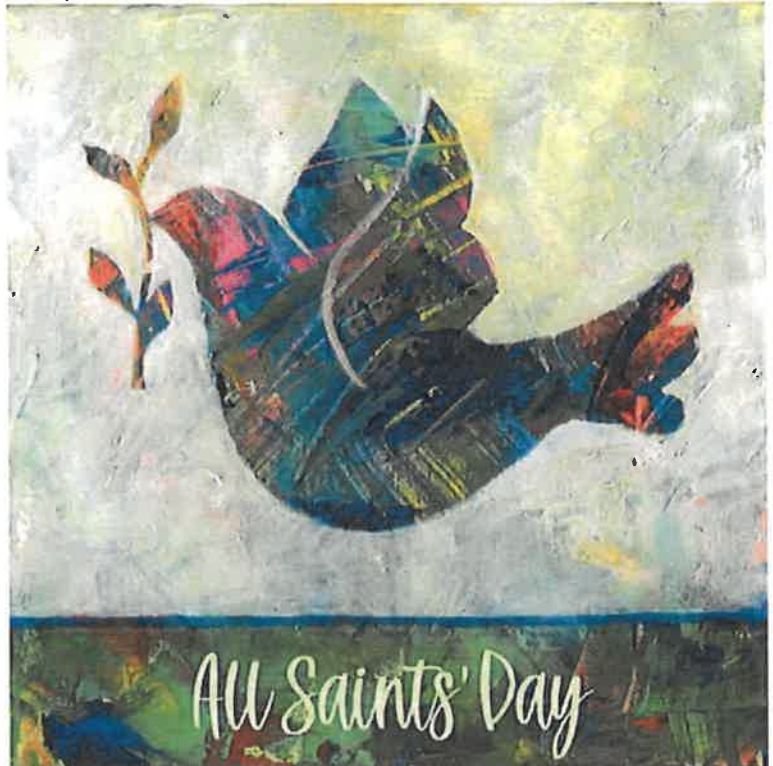
ALL SAINTS DAY...

This year we will celebrate All Saint's Day on Sunday, November 5th. All Saint's Day is a day where we pause to remember and celebrate the lives of those among us who have left their physical bodies and whose spirits now are in complete union with God.

The United Methodist Church says this about All Saint's Day:

Historically, the Church has confessed a belief in the "communion of the saints," which includes not only all living believers, but also all who have gone before us. When we celebrate Holy Communion, we experience the communion of saints, feasting with believers past, present and future. The author of Hebrews 12 reminds us that these saints, a "great cloud of witnesses," surrounds us and cheers us on.

We will again celebrate the lives of those who we remember but are no longer with us. You will have an opportunity to light a candle in their memory, we will ring the church bells to celebrate their time on earth with us and we will celebrate Holy Communion as a way of joining with them in God's great union.



This year you will also have another way of remembering your loved ones in worship. During the second half of October, a white cloth will be placed in the foyer by the double-glass doors. You will find permanent markers there and you are invited to write the names of those you are remembering. This second year, we ask that you do not repeat the names of those you already wrote last year. Instead, you are welcome to write the names of those you have lost this year or many years ago.

Each year, we will wash the cloth only once. Then, everyone will again be invited to write the names of those lost in that year. The result will be a permanent and ever-new remembering of those we love.

We will use the cloth with the names as the communion table covering each year on All Saint's Day. This can be a powerful reminder that although they are not physically here with us, and although that is painful, we believe and boldly proclaim that this temporal life is not the end. In God, we are all one and will all be united again.

Maggie Valley United Methodist Church - Worship Service 10:30 am

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Rev. Mike Shirley, Assistant Pastor – Cell (804) 714-6319

Paval Wlosok, Pianist & Choir Director

Janice Rogers, Organist

"Knowing Christ, Growing Faith, Serving Others"

Maggie Valley United Methodist Church

"LOVE IN ACTION" Newsletter

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Maggie Valley, NC 28751

On the web at www.maggieumc.org

