



Love in Action

The Newsletter of Maggie Valley United Methodist Church

Volume 16, Issue II

November, 2023

Praise the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord because he is good, because his faithful love endures forever.

Psalm 106:1



You likely know that I have a 2-year-old son, James — if you have heard any sermon I've preached in the last 2 years, I talk about him almost every week. I'm pretty much wrapped around his little fingers! Having a 2-year-old is amazing! James is a joy, a gift, an absolute delight in so many ways! And... he is 2. His emotions are big: when he is happy, he is SOO happy! When he is upset or sad or confused, he feels that with a fervor that is unmatched.

Recently, I've been trying this new thing when he gets upset. As he is crying, I will sit down with him and pull him close. Then I'll remind him that there is a roof over his head, he's got clothes on (most of the time) and he has food in his belly. I'll say this several times in a row. I don't think he totally understands what I am trying to say to him but being that close and talking that gently usually does the trick. He will calm down and eventually go back to playing or tearing up the house.

Of course, there are plenty of times where I am tired or cranky or missing enough patience to do that. Instead of getting on his level and trying to remind him of all there is to be grateful for, I'll just pick him up and try to distract him, move on to the next thing.

I am kind of like James sometimes. When things aren't going just the way I want, I forget to look around and see how truly blessed I am. I don't usually fall on the ground crying, but I don't practice gratitude as often, I don't give thanks nearly as much as I could. I think many of us are like this. We become so focused on the real pain, hurt and need around us that we forget all there is to give thanks for.

I am not suggesting that we should have a "pie-in-the-sky" sort of attitude. There is real suffering in our world, in our lives. Too many of us are struggling mentally, emotionally, spiritually, relationally, financially or in some other real way. Life can be hard. But if we wait for everything to be perfect, for everything to be just right to give thanks, we may be waiting the rest of our lives. As Kate Bowler's aptly titled book reminds us, "There is no Cure for Being Human."

Brother David Steindl-Rast says, "The root of joy is gratitude...It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful... Look closely and you will find that people are happy because they are grateful. The opposite of gratefulness is just taking everything for granted... We are never more than one grateful thought away from peace of heart."

At the heart of gratitude for people of faith is the verse quoted above from Psalm 106:1. The core of why we give thanks is God and God's faithful love that "endures forever." When I start to feel like life is unfair, when I'm struggling to see all that God has done in me, I need that verse from Psalm 106. It's almost like God sitting down with me like I do with my son, reminding me of what I'm missing, pointing my heart and my head back towards giving thanks.

Maybe you too have forgotten the importance of gratitude with all that is going on in the world and in your life. Maybe you don't even know where to begin with giving thanks. For me it can be as simple as beginning each day with a pen and a piece of paper. I write "God, I am grateful for" and after that I start listing everything I can muster any amount of gratitude for. I thank God for the big stuff like my family and this church. I even thank God for the little stuff like good coffee and a nice chair. It doesn't matter what you are grateful for or how you give thanks. Try it and know that God will meet you there.

I am trying to be more intentional with giving thanks, and I'm coming to find that spending time in gratitude each day is as essential as the air I breathe. It sustains me. It puts a spring in my step. It calls me to see the world as Christ seemed to see it: full of possibility and hope. As David Orr reminds us, "Hope is an Imperative."

Things may not be as we want right now. That can be hard. I am praying with you and for you in this season and always. But try practicing gratitude — again for most of us. Watch how your heart will open as you do. Notice how there is more space for kindness. Welcome the new hope and love you will find. Being grateful will change your life, so watch out!

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Cole

"Surviving the Holidays" Grief Group

Dates: November 28, December 5, December 12, December 19: 1:00-3:00

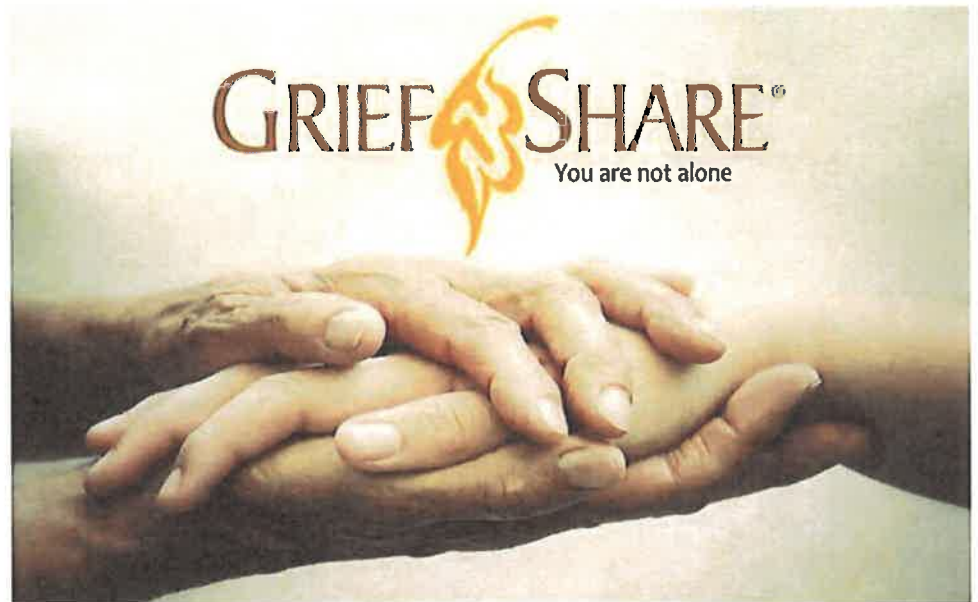
Location: Grace Classroom

Leader: Sue Shirley

The holiday season will soon be upon us. This might be your first holiday after a loved one's death, or second, third, or beyond.

In these coming days, you are going to experience some tough emotions. With its focus on family, yearly traditions, expectations, social events and "cheer", emotions can blindsides you.

You can lessen the emotional impact by knowing what to expect and being prepared. Surviving the Holidays is here to help. With others who understand what you might be going through, you will watch a video, be part of a discussion group, and receive a Survival Guide with daily encouragement and helpful information for the days ahead. These tools will enable you not only to survive the coming holidays, but also to face them with a measure of peace and assurance.



BELINDA MARR, TREASURER'S REPORT...

Monthly Financial Report for SEPTEMBER 2023



Treasurer Report

SEPTEMBER		
Needed for Budget	\$	\$23,882.98
Expenses	\$	\$20,116.97
Offerings	\$	\$62,123.12
Over/Under	\$	\$42,006.15

CLERGY & STAFF APPRECIATION...

We are dedicating the month of November to our staff and clergy as an opportunity to give thanks for the work they do for us and a lot they do behind the scenes. November is a perfect time to remember and give thanks to the people of our congregation that work hard to make our church a beautiful place to worship, fellowship and grow in our faith.

This month here are some suggestions on ways to express your thankfulness:

- A card with a special note of thanks.
- A gift card for gas, groceries, restaurant, car wash, etc.
- A donation in their honor to a local charity.
- Offer to pray for them throughout the year and let them know you are doing it.
- Tell them you appreciate all they do in a phone call or face-to-face meeting.
- Offer to take them to breakfast, lunch or out for coffee.
- Put together a little gift basket.
- Offer to bring them a meal for one night.
- Put together a bouquet of flowers and deliver it to their home.
- A VISA or AMEX gift card



Our staff and clergy are the following people:

- Pastor, Cole Altizer
- Pastor, Mike Shirley
- Administrative Assistant/Treasurer, Belinda Marr
- Organist, Janice Rogers
- Shepherds Table Team Leader, Shirley Saxton
- Food Pantry, Gail England
- Preschool, Gail Quick & Beverly Ketner
- Director of Music, Pavel Wlosok
- Manager of Facilities, Victor Quick

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, Donna Brailsford, The Family of Cindy Fogle, Grace Heger, Bob Humphrey, Destiny Little, The Family of Jason Moody, Wanda Ann Kinnamon's Mother, Jim Neely, Patsy Pickett, Carole Norquay, Georgia Painter, Michael Sams



Congregational Care Team

Those in hospital and/or surgeries:

Cheryl Little, Mike Simon (Ohio), Timothy Stockel, Gloria Teeter



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, Zelda Hanson, Jeanette Miller, Dave Pickens, Leon Roach, Ron Sellers, David Wagner

Focus — This month as you gather with friends and family, we invite you to pray this prayer aloud: Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you've done for us. We thank you for the splendor of creation, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side. Thank you, O great God, for the gift of food and shelter and all the simple things we sometimes take for granted. We ask your blessing for those who do not have such basic needs — protect them and provide for them, even through us. God, may we — at all times and in all places — give thanks to you in all things. In Jesus' name and through the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER...

Holy and awesome God, we need your Spirit to guide all that we do. Move us where you are moving. Call us to who you are calling. Fill us with your life-changing love. Embolden us to be people who work for your Kingdom, here and now. Let us be instruments of your peace for this community and beyond. We ask you to breakthrough in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

November

2023

October							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
29	30	31					24	25	26	27	28	29	30

SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
29	Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	30	Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	31	Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	1	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall UMW (2pm) — Fellowship Hall	2	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	3	Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall	4	Destiny Little Baby Shower (11:30-1:30pm) — Fellowship Hall
5	ALL SAINTS WORSHIP Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	6	Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	7	Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	8	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	9	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	10	Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall	11	
12	Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	13	Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	14	"Sacred Seeing" (7:30am) — Parking Lot <u>Charge Conference</u> & One Board Meeting (5:30pm) — Fellowship Hall	15	Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	16	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall Men's Group (5:30pm) — Grace Classroom	17	Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall	18	Men's Breakfast (8am) — Grace Classroom
19	Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am)	20	Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	21	OFFICE CLOSED	22	Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study (6-7:30pm) — Grace Classroom	23	Happy Thanksgiving! OFFICE CLOSED NO PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY	24	Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall	25	
26	Connections Sunday School (9:00am) Worship (10:30am) Decorate Church after Worship	27	Food Pantry (10-12) Shepherd's Table (3:30pm)	28	Grief Share (1pm-3pm) — Grace Classroom Put up Nativity Scene (10:30am)	29	Food Pantry (10-12) Bible Study	30	Pastor's Bible Study (9am) — Fellowship Hall	1	Grace Bible Study Class (9:30am) — Fellowship Hall	2	Holiday Boutique (9am-2pm)

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES...

HAPPY NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

4	Nathan Roth	16	Lynn Walsh
4	Beth Childs	18	Christie Chandler
4	Lorraine Cook	19	Matthew Sutton
4	Donna McElroy	20	Ted Watts
5	Peggy Knight	20	Margo Johnson
6	Erma Bond	20	Sandra Knight
6	Bill Chamberlin	21	Dan Dry
7	Jessica Kanupp	21	Lena Duncan
7	Kathryn Brannen	22	Susan Dry
7	Bruce Kossman	22	Brandon Meadows
7	Mary Lucy McGuirt	23	Beth Brown
7	DeVere Williams	24	Jane Kirby
8	Lili Meadows	25	Shelly Coker
9	Belinda Ferguson	25	Shirley Kelley
11	Carolyn Pilgrim	25	Janet Lilley
12	Marjorie Carter	28	Julius Rountree
12	Kayla Queen Green	28	Nancy Frank
13	Valerie Thompson	29	Elita Stamp
13	Sue Campbell	30	Belinda Marr
13	Roy Sapough		

HAPPY NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARY!

6	Bonnie & Lew Hanson
14	Shelda & Scott Muirhead (1982)
19	Erna & Sten Lundgren
21	Cynthia & DeVere Williams (1979)



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 BAR SOAP, TOOTHBRUSHES/TOOTHPASTE, SHAMPOO, RAMEN NOODLES, FRUIT GRANOLA BARS, GRITS, INSTANT OATMEAL, CRACKERS, and COOKIES this month.** Personal hygiene items are appreciated also. Thank you for helping! If anyone has winter coats they would like to donate, please bring them to the Food Pantry. **We will be closed on Wednesday, November 22nd.**

"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 Tuesday, November 14th at 7:30am in the Fellowship Hall.**

The UMW Grace Circle meeting will meet on Thursday, November 2nd at 2:00 PM in the Grace Classroom. All women are welcome!

Friday, November 10th is Veterans Day. Don't forget to say thank you to those who served our country so bravely.

There will be a charge conference on Tuesday, November 14th at 5:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The One Board will meet following the charge conference in the Fellowship Hall.

All "Love in Action" articles for December are due to Belinda by Thursday, November 16th.

The Men's Group WILL meet on Thursday, November 16th at 5:30 and will have the Men's breakfast on Saturday, November 18th at 8:00am in the Grace Classroom. All men are invited.

We will be decorating our Sanctuary for Christmas on Sunday, November 26st at 11:30. Nothing gets you in the Christmas spirit as much as listening to Christmas music and decorating our church with friends. It won't take long if everyone could help for about an hour.

The Church Office will be closed November 22nd and November 23th for the Thanksgiving Holidays.
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

We will be putting up the Nativity Scene on **Tuesday, November 28th at 10:30pm.** Meet out front of the church – thank you for your help! **In case of bad weather, we will meet on Thursday, November 30th at 10:30.**

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!

This year's date for the **Holiday Boutique is Saturday, December 2nd.** We are accepting donations of slightly used men and women's clothing, handbags, shoes, jewelry, scarfs, Christmas, and nice gift items. Also, if you have crafts to donate, we would love to have them for sale. 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 Cole's Bible Study meets on Thursday mornings at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. We invite everyone to come! **We will NOT meet on November 23rd due to Thanksgiving Holidays.**

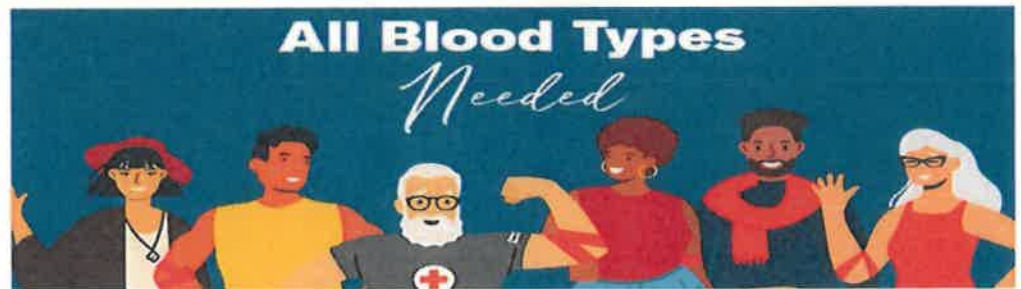
December 2 | 9am-2pm
Maggie Valley UMC | 4192 Soco Rd., Maggie Valley

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE & BAKE SALE

**New & Gently used men's & women's
clothing, shoes, handbags,
jewelry, Christmas & unique gifts
Featuring local artist, Zeata Ruff
& a crafters corner**

**Proceeds support the food ministries of Maggie Valley UMC.
Celebrate the holiday season with us &
help support a great cause**

Weather make-up date is Dec. 9th (Dec following Saturday)



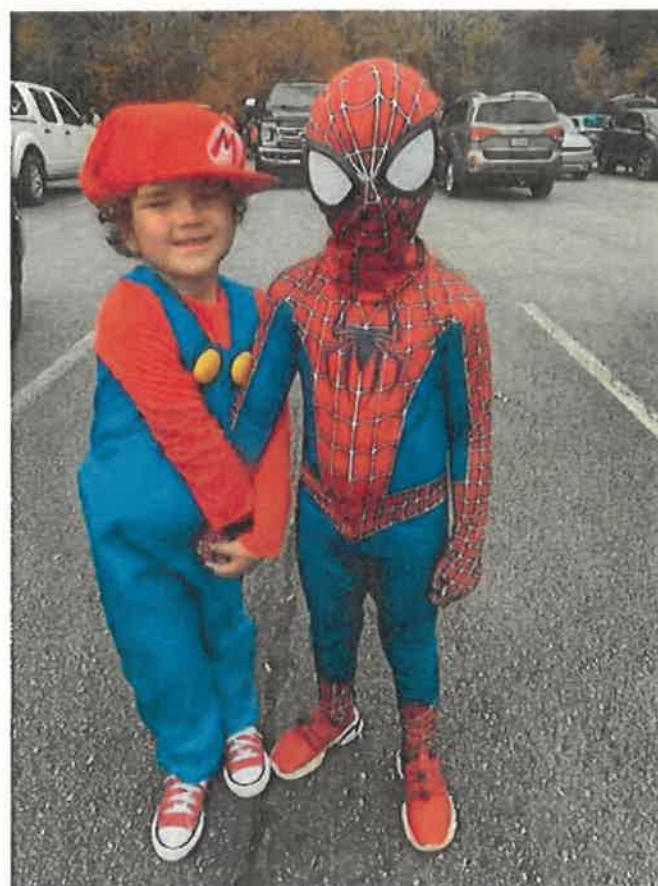
Blood Drive **Maggie Valley** **United Methodist Church**

Fellowship Hall
4192 Soco Rd
Maggie Valley, NC 28751

Tuesday, December 12, 2023
1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.







Maggie Valley United Methodist Church

4192 Soco Road

Maggie Valley, NC 28751

Office Phone (828) 926-8036

Fax (828) 926-3932

Rev. Cole Altizer, Pastor - Cell (828) 577-9906

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

Paval Wlosok, Pianist & Choir Director

Janice Rogers, Organist

Belinda Marr, Administrative Assistant/Treasurer

“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

