

SPUMC NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 9

September 2021

Mission Statement

The mission of
Spruce Pine United
Methodist Church is
to be a
Beacon on a Hill
spreading the Good News
of
Jesus Christ through:
Worship, Fellowship,
Education, Nurturing
and Service.

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Sermons and Bulletins:

Watch the sermons and read
the bulletins (and newsletters)
at:

www.sprucepineumc.org



From the Pastor's Desk: 30 Days Has September



Are you familiar with the poem/song that helps us remember how many days any particular month has? It states: Thirty days has September, April, June, and November. All the rest have thirty-one. But February's twenty-eight. The leap year, which comes once in four, gives February one day more. For some reason, I've never been able to remember this. I learned a different method for remembering the days of each month – by using our knuckles. In this method, our knuckles represent the months with 31 days, and the in-between divots represent months with less than 31 days. When making a fist, the index-finger-knuckle is January, the divot next to it is February. Continue on until you get to your pinky-knuckle. This represents July. Then come back to your index-finger-knuckle which now represents August, and finish up that way.

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Weekly Scriptures

September 5, 2021

- ♦ Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23
- ♦ Psalm 125 or Psalm 124
- ♦ James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17
- ♦ Mark 7:24-39

September 12, 2021

- ♦ Proverbs 1:20-33
- ♦ Psalm 19
- ♦ James 3:1-12
- ♦ Mark 8:27-38

September 19, 2021

- ♦ Proverbs 31:10-31
- ♦ Psalm 1
- ♦ James 3:13 - 4:3, 7-8a
- ♦ Mark 9:30-37

September 26, 2021

- ♦ Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22
- ♦ Psalm 124
- ♦ James 5:13-20
- ♦ Mark 9:38-50

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK *Continued from pg. 1*

Potato... potahto; tomato... tomahto. Both get the job done. The reason I bring this up is because Autumn often begins a busy "season" for many people. Many tasks with numerous different approaches toward them. Families with kids start new school schedules of carpooling, after-school activities and extracurriculars, or sending kids off to college to begin new chapters of their lives. Shortly after we get into these rhythms and routines, the holidays sneak up on us – which begin a whole new "season" of busyness. Well, the United Methodist Church takes a similar path starting in the Fall, which continues until the end of the year.

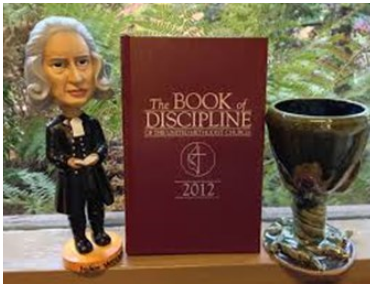
In September, the Committee on Lay Leadership (a.k.a. the Nominations Committee) meets to discuss the church's laity leadership roles for various committees and ministries. This is part of the "method" to our Methodism. This year, we'll meet again to consider the direction of the church for the next few years, and then recruit lay leaders who have a passion for the church and its ministries. Likewise, our Trustee Committee typically meets to review what has been done over the past year, as well as, address other current buildings and grounds needs the church has. Trustees also decide on the leadership of the committee for the upcoming year (or more). In addition, the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee (S/PPRC) meets in order to complete a yearly assessment of the Pastor, and the staff. This year, our Western NC Conference has implemented a new process that is designed to help guide the Pastor and the church's leadership work on shared ministry goals. Further, the Finance Committee is extra-busy this time of year, as the church's 2022 budget gets planned, discussed, edited, adjusted, and submitted for approval by the Administrative Council. And speaking of Administrative Council, yes, they too will meet in September – more than once – to discuss upcoming "crossroads" issues the church faces. They also will meet to approve the 2022 budget (once submitted) and will also approve everything needed for SPUMC's upcoming annual Charge Conference, which occurs on Sunday, October 10.

Among the busyness of September, we also plan the remainder of the year as far as ministries and worship. SPUMC is hoping to offer the community another drive-in Trunk-or-Treat for Halloween depending on what happens with Covid in our community, so be on the lookout for more details the further we get into September. Shortly after Halloween, comes All Saints Day, where we remember the saints who have gone before us to the "church triumphant." Then comes Thanksgiving, and the Sunday after Thanksgiving (this year) is the first Sunday of Advent – the four-week period of preparing to celebrate the birth of a savior.

So, in the midst of all the things we need to "do," I want to encourage all of us to take time to "be." Make time to spend with God in study and prayer. Focus on the well-being of you and your family. Be kind and patient with others as we continue to navigate through Covid and other issues that have been dividing people. Let's remember who and whose we are, and that we are called to help bring about God's Kingdom here on earth – to help bring salt and light into a bland and dim world. We are Christ's hands, feet, heart, and love.

In humble service with you... Pastor Rick

The Church Office will have modified hours and operations from September 8 through September 15 due to the office manager's vacation. Regular operations will resume on September 16.



Methodism 101: Spiritual Formation – Grace (Part 1)

Many who read this newsletter have probably, at one time or another, said this blessing before partaking in a meal. It starts something like, “God is good. God is great. Let us thank Him for our food...” A beautiful tradition to show gratitude for a meal. It has even been referred to as, “Saying grace.”

So, what about grace, as it relates to Methodism? Well, we United Methodists recognize three forms of grace: prevenient, justifying and sanctifying. Each one will be defined, separately, over the next three editions of this newsletter.

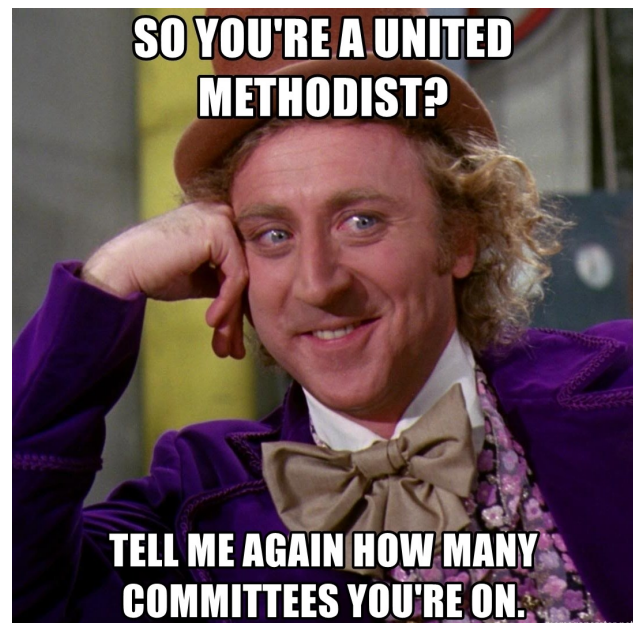
Let’s start with prevenient grace, which is God’s active presence in our lives before we ever sense the Divine at work in our lives. It is the grace given by God before we even begin our relationship with God. It is the grace that goes before us.

Think of prevenient grace as the porch on a house. You have a house you have passed each day on your way to school or work, without giving it much thought. God is there, sitting in a rocking chair, inviting you to come and sit a spell, but being okay that you are not quite ready to accept the invitation.

In more fanciful terms, according to Wesley, prevenient grace is that “light wherewith the Son of God enlighteneth everyone that cometh into the world, showing every [person] to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with [their] God.” And something else to consider – Wesley believed that God’s grace prevents the total destruction of the divine image in us. Sit with that one for a minute or two. What a powerful and beautiful thought.

But there is more to a house than a porch. Stay tuned...

UNITED METHODIST MEMES



Did You Know?

- John Wesley did not intend to split from the Church of England. However, with the American Revolution, most of the Anglican priests returned home. Faced with the fact that none of the Methodists in the colonies could receive the sacraments, Wesley ordained ministers whom he sent to the United States. He was practical even when it caused problems within the Church. This act was the beginning of the separation that formed the current United Methodist Church in America.
- For more than 100 years, Koreans and Korean-Americans have been making the world their parish through the Methodist Movement. Today, the Korean community represents one of the strongest-growing parts of The United Methodist Church, supporting mission and ministry locally and around the world.
- The Bible is somewhat like a library. Our Protestant Bible is a collection of 66 books – 39 in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and 27 in the New Testament – written over many centuries. They were eventually brought together to form the canon, the books that have been accepted as authoritative for the Christian faith and life since the fourth century of the Common Era (the years since Christ’s birth).

September Calendar

2nd - SPRC Meeting - 5:30 pm - Fellowship Hall Area

6th - Labor Day - Church Office Open

7th - SPUMC Book Club - 10 am

12th - Administrative Council Meeting - After Church - Fellowship Hall

12th - Swiss Pine Lake Community Association - 3 - 5 pm - Fellowship Hall

12th - Summit Youth Hangout / Spruce Pine Campground (hot dogs, games, and s'mores). 4:00 p.m.

13th - Lamplighters Open House - 6 pm

14th - Lamplighters begin

16th - Finance Committee - 5:30 pm - Fellowship Hall

20th - UMW Nightingale Circle Meeting - 7 pm

September Birthdays

2 - Quincy Sparks	10 - Diane Sheeley	16 - Bill Sparks
3 - Mary Wray	11 - Jessica Wustrow	18 - Gary Curtis
4 - Tim Drum II	12 - Diane Walker	19 - Brandt Thayer
5 - Jyl Duffy	14 - Danna Gibson	20 - Matt Miller
6 - Richie Ritter	15 - Susan Curtis	24 - Emree Hoilman
8 - Angie White	16 - Brooks Barber	26 - Bryan Thayer
9 - Ken Lentz	16 - Jeffrey Bayuick	28 - Laura Curtis Hodges
9 - Kathy Miller	16 - Martha Long	28 - Tyler Dunn

September Anniversaries

1 - Maria Douglass & Valery Usov	22 - Paul & Sherry Sherman
1 - Marvin & Diane Walker	26 - George & Glenna Tasedan
8 - Jacob & Stephanie Edwards	28 - Ray & Joyce Alvarez

Thanks to:

- All who have helped with the restart of in person worship and with the continuation of online Worship!!!
- Matt Miller who repaired the office door!
- Everyone helping with the online Worship.
- All who remember the less fortunate and contribute to the Community Assistance Fund.
- All who have contributed to the Roof Fund and the AV Fund.
- Everyone who gives to the Shepherd's Staff, who allowed us to contribute 397 items in August 2021, (our best monthly food giving of all time) all who help at the M-Y Parish Food Bank.
- Members who take meals to the sick and shut ins, those who give rides to church and to the doctor for those who can't do it themselves.
- All who serve: lectors, children's time, etc.
- All working on Church facility renovations!

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Visit us on the web at
www.sprucepineumc.org

Shepherd's Staff

**Food Donated over the years to
Shepherd's Staff:**

2014 - 1202
2015 - 1078
2016 - 1030
2017 - 1062
2018 - 1213
2019 - 1526
2020 - 769

January 2021 - 122
February 2021 - 65
March 2021 - 218
April 2021 - 225
May 2021 - 269
June 2021 - 335
July 2021 - 397
August 2021 - 494
Total - 2125

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE UPDATE

Thanks to your generosity we have helped 9 families and individuals with projects totaling \$1,668.21 in August 2021.

Since 2013, we have helped families and individuals with \$194,264.68 through community assistance.