

Englewood United Methodist Church Newsletter

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JANUARY 1, 2024

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CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE TO GOD'S LOVE AS WE GO

One of my toughest tasks is coming up with a title for an article or sermon. I tend to overthink things...a lot. But this time I had the title ready before the article. Why? Because that isn't just a title. That's our new vision statement at Englewood UMC. After a lot of prayerful wrestling, our Vision Team identified what words captured our church's heart for ministry. So that you understand the meaning behind those words, let's talk about where they came from.

We begin with that first part, 'Connecting all people to God's love'. During our conversations, the word we used most is 'relationship'. Relationships and deep friendships are very important to our people. From this key characteristic we highlighted our need for deep connections. There is no doubt that connecting with one another and having a real experience of God in worship and in ministry is very important to Englewood UMC. Another word we value is diversity and so we felt the need to use that word 'all'. It was these conversations that led to 'Connecting all people to God's love'.

'As we go.' In Rachel Gilmore's book *Expanding the Expedition Reach with Missional Communities*, she shared the importance of the great commandment in Matthew's gospel: "Go and make disciples". But she offered an interesting insight. You could also interpret this as "Make disciples as you go." That might seem like a simple shift, but I see a significant change to the call. We still have the call to 'go' to leave our places of comfort to connect others to God's love, but there's also a call to connect others as we go through our daily lives. Suddenly, no place is secular as we are seeking to connect people to God's love at home, at school, where we work, and even the grocery store. Ministry moves from an experience on Sunday morning, to a week-long activity of seeing God and pointing out God's presence to others.

You may remember in my previous newsletter article that I was detailing my experience at the Level Up

conference in Pittsburgh. We discussed the need for us to seek ways for church to happen outside the walls of the sanctuary and in the places we seek fellowship in the community. From dog park church to dinner church, the possibilities are endless. These fresh expressions are an example of connecting all people to God's love as we go. When we expand our vision from traditional church to the community outside our doors, worship and discipleship can begin to look a lot different. But two things are needed for us to be successful: our laity and deep listening.

The vision statement of our church does not only belong to the pastor, the staff, or our committees. This is a vision for all of us, especially our laity, to take part in. If all of us examine ways to connect all people to God's love as we go, imagine the places we can reach and the people that will experience the deep connections and meaningful relationships we at Englewood UMC have to offer. But along with this is a need to be good listeners. Listening and prayer were a big part of our work as a vision team. We want to be guided, not by our desires, but by the will of the Holy Spirit. The same is true as we seek to create fresh new expressions of the church in our community. We're not trying to clone what we do on Sunday morning and place it somewhere else. Rather, we need to seek to know the people of our community, their needs, how they connect to one another, and identify their gifts for ministry in order for worship to emerge naturally.

There is still a lot to wrestle with. The next task for our Vision Team is to work with you, our staff, and our ministry teams to set goals for how we can live into this new vision. Take this vision statement home with you. Pray over it and listen to the Spirit for ways in which you might take part in connecting all people to God's love as you go.

Pastor Nathan



Our Sympathy Is Expressed To:

Hayden Thompson Glenn & Dixon Glenn and Anne Gray Thompson and their mother, Stephanie Overton Thompson upon the death of Hayden & Anne's father, **Roy Victor Thompson III** on December 1, 2023. Our sympathy is also expressed to Crayton & Sylvia Overton.

Thank You

Prayer Shawl / Blanket Ministry,

My name is Britany Wilson. Your ministry donated countless prayer shawls and lap blankets to my veteran outreach project last year. You helped me serve veterans in over 10 different facilities and throughout 5 counties. I am extremely sorry this thank you is so late. I was finishing nursing school, was sick and time got away from me. I hope you accept my apology and great appreciation! THANK EACH and EVERY one of YOU!!

Thank you also for thinking of me personally and providing me with a blanket and prayers as I faced and got through surgery. Each and every prayer was heard, felt and greatly appreciated!

Thank you,
Britany

Thank You

To all my wonderful friends at Englewood United Methodist Church.

Thank you all so much for the cards and calls checking on me since my surgery. I am slowly recovering but will be quite sometime before I'm up and going. Older age definitely has its limitations. It is so nice though to know how many friends are thinking of me. My you all have a blessed Christmas holiday.

In Christ Name,
Dessie Clark

Thank You

Dear Pastor and Members,

We at Williford Elementary School appreciate the kindness you have shown to us in help feeding our students with the backpack buddies. We are s appreciative for what you do. We just want to say thank you for all you do. We look forward to working with you in 2024. Thanks again and God Bless each of you.

Sincerely,
Joyce Lynch, Parent Community Liaison



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------|----|---------------------|
| 01 | Larry Lugar | 21 | Kathy Harrison |
| 01 | Betty Poplin | 22 | David Thomas Smith |
| 02 | Bill Ames | 23 | Carolyn Mobley |
| 03 | Ellen Hicks | 23 | David Spreder |
| 04 | Robin Tank | 23 | Jo Wilson |
| 05 | Deborah Ladd | 24 | Janice Alford |
| 09 | Ira Varney | 25 | Mary Lou Matthews |
| 11 | Brenda Bazemore | 27 | Paul Dunn |
| 15 | Brenda Ellis | 27 | Bettina Howard |
| 15 | Ken Jackson | 27 | Bob League |
| 16 | Kristin Von Elling | 28 | Greg Roth II |
| 17 | Mickey League | 29 | Christian Davenport |
| 17 | Brittany Quigley | 31 | Izabelle Clark |
| 18 | Jim Dunn | 31 | Zachary Woodley |
| 20 | Michael Ayers | | |

A Big THANK YOU from the EUMC Staff to everyone who made a contribution to the Staff Appreciation Fund. We really appreciate you!
Nathan, Savanna, Christian, Melissa, Sharon & Nancy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & TRUSTEES MEETING

The Board of Directors and Trustees will meet on
Monday, January 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
in Room 206/207.

SENIOR ADULT FELLOWSHIP



The Senior Adult Fellowship will meet in the Fellowship Hall for Bingo at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 3rd and Wednesday, January 17th.

Thank You

Dear Friends,

Some time ago I received a beautiful arrangement of flowers from your Flower Ministry. This act of kindness touched my heart and soul. This is my second time fighting cancer. I do believe I have your prayers and praying our God is listening. I do believe in prayers. Thank you!

God Bless,
Bobbi Weeks



The deadline for receiving information to be included in the FEBRUARY Newsletter is Thursday, January 18th



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith News

January 7 11:30 a.m. United Women in Faith Executive Board Meeting - Library
 January 16 10:00 a.m. Women of the Way - Room 4
 January 16 6:00 p.m. Lydia's Sisters' Circle - Fellowship Hall
 Hostesses: Lisa Hicks and Amy Quigley
 Program: Harriet Buss will present on her recent bike trip thru Croatia.
 Please bring your own bag supper. Drinks and desserts will be provided.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

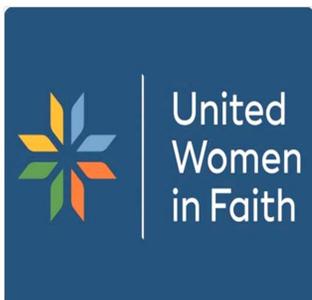
Tuesday, January 2 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Fellowship Hall (Blankets)
 Tuesday, January 9 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Parlor

Shawls and blankets will be placed on the altar rail for blessing on Sunday, January 14th.

Do you know someone who would be comforted by receiving a Prayer Shawl or a Blanket? Forms are available on the table outside the church office for you to request shawls/blankets. You may call the church office at 252-443-2926. You may also contact Betty Poplin at 252-985-0950.



Women of The Way Circle



The Women of the Way met at the Olive Garden Restaurant on Tuesday, December 19th for a Christmas luncheon. Pastor Nathan, Nancy Porter and Christian Davenport also joined us for this time of fellowship/food. Sharon led the group in prayer prior to the meal. Jeannie passed around cards to sign for the women of The Lighthouse who will be given \$20 gift cards each for Christmas from the Women of the Way in addition to the two ceiling fans we gave them at the Christmas dinner. We all enjoyed our fellowship time and good food.

Regular meetings will resume in January with our annual pledge service. The United Women in Faith is open to all women of the church and we invite you to come join us in the Aldersgate classroom on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

FAITH CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES OF NASH COUNTY - JANUARY NEEDS



Thank you for your faithfulness in continuing to support this mission project by donating food to feed the hungry in Nash County during the first 10 months of 2023 and during November and December and supplies needed to keep themselves and their clothing clean. Your donations mean so much to this nonprofit agency and enables them to continue to help others.

Starting this Monday, January 1st, the **“Meals of the Month”** donation will be **Spaghetti and Canned Sauce**. There are two LOVE CANS located in the area beneath the name tags in the church lobby, labeled **“FCM MEALS OF THE MONTH”**. Please donate these items to help stock their pantry throughout the month of January. This is another wonderful opportunity for this generous congregation to help others who can't help themselves.



ENGLEWOOD UNITED METHODIST MEN

The United Methodist Men will meet on **Tuesday, January 9th** at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Pending confirmation, our speaker will be someone from the North Carolina Education Lottery who will talk about the financial performance of the lottery and its contribution to our education system in North Carolina.

Following this presentation, we will review the financial performance of the peanut production program for the past year.

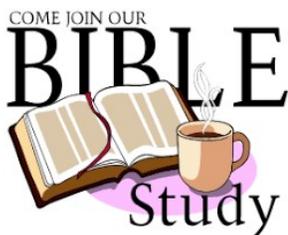
Please mark your calendar to attend. The meal is very reasonably priced at \$5.00 (free for first time visitors). I look forward to seeing you there.

Peter Varney



2024 FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2024 Flower Calendar is now available for your use in reserving that special Sunday to place flowers in the sanctuary in memory of your loved ones or in honor of a special event in your family. The 2024 Flower Calendar is now online on the church website (www.inglewood-umc.com). Under the Worship heading click on Flowers. Scroll down for instructions to use the calendar to reserve a date. Click on the Sunday you would like to provide flowers. If the date is available, provide your name, email and the message you would like placed in the bulletin regarding the person(s) or event being honored by the flowers. Click 'Submit'. You should get an email confirmation that your date has been reserved. If you have questions or are unable to make your reservation, call the church office (252-443-2926) and we will be happy to help you. If the Sunday you would like to reserve has already been scheduled and you would like to place flowers in the narthex, please call the church office. As in the past you will receive an email or phone call reminder the week before your scheduled Sunday.



Thursday Evening Bible Study - January 4th at 6:30 p.m.

Our Bible study resumes, as we look at the Parables of Jesus. Please note our new starting time of 6:30 p.m. It has been a real pleasure and privilege to get to share together in our various studies. Thanks for helping me to learn, as well. As always, if there is a specific topic, book of the Bible, or something you have always wanted to learn about and discuss; I am more than happy to lead a discussion on that. Please let me know if you will be attending so I will know how many copies of the material we need to provide. Rev. Geeting will be leading the study. Please contact Rev. Geeting at dgeeting@me.com or 540-841-2900. Thanks and blessings!



TRUSTEES CORNER!

It is a privilege to care for our church and I would like to express our gratitude to those members who say YES I CAN DO THAT! We are all caretakers for EUMC and will continue to witness to our community by providing space for meetings, community events and activities. I encourage you to also be diligent concerning our building and grounds. If you see something that needs attention, please record it in one of the Trustee notebooks available at the church office or in the Narthex.

Our audio-visual project is waiting for the availability of the parts we need and then we will create a better way to witness to all!

Each Trustee is a volunteer to open and close the church on Sunday of a particular month. If you would like to help, please let Barbara or Christian know. Many, many thanks for these caretakers of our congregation's safety.

Trustees are: Jack Ellis, Lea Ann Nichols, Lee Pullen, Jerry Lee Ezzell, Lisa Hicks, Terry Woodley, Brian Collins, Janet Hagan and Barbara Batts.

Safe Sanctuaries Training

I think we can all agree that making sure our church is a safe place for children is a top priority. Help us make sure we keep it that way by participating in our Safe Sanctuaries Training on Sunday, January 14 at 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The training will not last more than an hour. We'll go over our church's policies that are in place to protect the most vulnerable among us, and also have time for questions and suggestions for improvement. The training will also include a background check.

Current Safe Sanctuaries training is a requirement for those of us who work with children and youth at the church. However, because we're truly a family here at EUMC and all spend time around our young people, it would be amazing to have our whole church be Safe Sanctuary trained. What a statement that would make about how important our children are to us at Englewood UMC! We hope to see everyone there!



AUTISM
AWARENESS

Our Autism Family groups had a very merry time at our meeting and Christmas celebration!

We had a great group of 40 enjoying dinner, crafts and fellowship!!! Many thanks to our EUMC FAMILY members for providing delicious desserts!!!!



OUTREACH MISSIONS PROJECTS - 2023

The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone for helping make our 2023 Mission Projects a success. As a congregation working together, we were able to provide love and hope to a lot of people.

We started the year off with our “Souper Bowl of Caring”. We chose to partner With “United Community Ministries” to provide assistance to those families temporarily living in the Bassett Center Shelter and men’s shelter. We raised \$4,112.50 to help with the expense of them staying there and also collected over \$1,000 in food and staple items for their use and in the Soup Kitchen. Our thanks to Barbara Batts, Rod Buckner, and Mike Williams for heading up this project for us.

Second, once again we partnered with Peacemakers of Rocky Mount to provide Toys for their annual Toy Store. We held a “Christmas in July” event to collect the toys. We provided 103 toys, gifts and gift cards for their Christmas event. This gave parents a chance to purchase Christmas gifts for their children at a reduced price so they could have a happy Christmas. Our thanks to Judy Overton and Patsy Lepak for representing our Church at The Toy Store shopping event.

Then, with help from our neighbors at St. Andrews Church, St. Paul Church and The Mill Church, we were able to provide 195 Christmas shoe boxes for the children of Armenia. Just think of all the joy this will provide to those children who have so little. We also provided 84 articles of bedding for the people of Armenia who are experiencing such turmoil in their lives. A special thank you to Mike and Beverly Williams for heading up this project and getting the shoeboxes and bedding delivered to the MERCI Center.

We want to give a special shout out to those who have made the trips to The MERCI Center to work on the Christmas Shoeboxes and packing all the items for shipment over the year – Carolyn Clay, David Earp, Sharon Roth, Steve and Debbie High, Patsy Lepak and Mike and Beverly Williams. And a special Thank-you to our Youth for spending one of their Workday Wednesdays at The MERCI Center working on various projects. In conjunction with The MERCI Center, our congregation purchased items needed and packed 308 health kits to be sent where ever needed. Our thanks to Sharon Roth and Mike and Beverly Williams for overseeing this project for us and Thank You to all those who came to pack. After the packing we enjoyed ice cream and fellowship – thanks to Barbara Batts for getting the goodies together.

We also want to acknowledge the monthly donations to our “Love Cans” for Faith Christian Ministry and The Salvation Army. We continue to deliver about One can per month for each.

In support of our troops, we made a donation of \$500 that was matched to the USO for our Military Men and Women for use with items needed during travel. Thank you to Rod Buckner for making this happen on our behalf.

And to all those who spend time each month delivering Meals on Wheels – Thank you! This is a wonderful service provided to our Senior Citizens. Thanks to Jeannie Gibbs for heading up this Outreach for us.

And a special “Thank You” to Pastor Nathan, Pastor Savanna, Nancy and Christian. We could not accomplish all this without their help.

So you see we have accomplished a lot of wonderful work this year. We have definitely been the hands of Jesus in providing love and hope for our neighbors at home and abroad. Again, thank you for helping us make these mission projects a success.

The Outreach Committee



The Outreach Committee has another exciting “Souper Bowl” planned coming in January 2024.

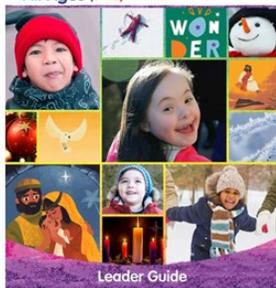
We will be working with “The Lighthouse Home for Women to help improve the property and provide needed items.

Stay tuned for more information in the “This Week” in January.

Happy
New Year

Children's Sunday School

CELEBRATE WONDER
All Ages (3-12)



Children 5th grade and younger are invited to join us on the children's hall for a time of learning, fellowship, and fun on Sunday mornings at 9:30! Our younger children will have a special activity in our nursery, while our older children journey through the Bible one week at a time.

Our theme for January is INCLUDE! Here's what we'll be learning about each week:

Date	Topic	Helper
January 7	Jesus' Baptism (Matthew 3:13-17)	Jeannie Gibbs
January 14	Calling the Disciples (Matthew 4:18-22)	Rita Vickers
January 21	Showing Love (Matthew 5:43-48)	Debbie High
January 28	God's Kingdom (Luke 13:18-21)	Helper Needed



Children's Church & Nursery

Our children and adult leaders are having such a wonderful time learning about God's Word in Children's Church during worship on Sunday mornings! Children are invited to join us in worship with their families at 10:30 a.m. After a special children's message just for them, our children can go back to the children's hall for more awesome activities! Parents can pick up children on the children's hall after worship ends.

During Children's Church time, we have a Nursery for infants through Pre-K, Children's Church for K-3rd Grade, and Tween Church for our 4th-6th Graders.

Children's Church Schedule

We're starting this new year with a focus on Jesus in a series called "New Testament Life Lessons". Each week we'll learn about a different story from the New Testament that shows us something about who Jesus is and who he calls us to be as his followers. It's going to be a great journey - we hope all our children will join us!

Date	Topic	Leader
January 7	We No Longer Have to Measure Up	Beth Ezzell
January 14	Dare to Be Different - Jesus Did!	Phyllis Woodley
January 21	Good News about Temptation	Savanna Becker
January 28	John the Baptist Baptized Jesus - Why?	Jessica Ezzell

Nursery Schedule

Date	Leader
January 7	Kenan Mills & Lea Ann Nichols
January 14	Savanna Becker & Ashley Murphy
January 21	Beth Ezzell & Beth Sentiles
January 28	Pattie Collins & Laura Earp

Saturday Morning CAFE (Children And Families @ Englewood)

Our Saturday Morning CAFE (Children And Families @ Englewood) is an opportunity for our children and their families to get together and explore our faith in fresh ways. The CAFE is for families with children in 5th grade and younger, and is designed for grownups to stay and enjoy the activities with us.

Our next CAFE will be on Saturday, January 20th at 10:00 a.m. We'll focus on the winter season and see how God brings new life, even when things seem cold and dark. We hope we'll see everyone here!



Youth News

UMYF JANUARY SCHEDULE

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>January 7</i>	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Youth Group
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>January 14</i>	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Youth Group
<i>** Deadline to sign up for Confirmation Class, beginning January 14th! **</i>			
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>January 21</i>	4:00 pm	Confirmation Class Begins
		5:00 - 7:00 pm	Youth Group
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>January 28</i>	4:00 pm	Confirmation Class
		5:00 - 7:00 pm	Youth Group - Acts Study Begins

UMYF Dinner Signups

Our UMYF meets on Sundays from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. for dinner, Bible study, games, and fellowship. If you are able to provide a meal for our UMYF one Sunday evening, our group would really appreciate your help! You can either bring the meal or donate financially toward our meal fund. The sign-up list is in the church lobby. Thank you for your ongoing support of our UMYF!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Provided By</u>
January 7	Mexican Food	_____
January 14	Comfort Food	_____
January 21	Breakfast Food	_____
January 28	Sandwiches	_____

CONFIRMATION STARTING IN JANUARY



A new Confirmation class for our youth begins on Sunday, January 21st! This class is for students in grades 6 and up who have not already completed Confirmation. We will meet on Sundays from 4:00-5:00 p.m. (an hour before our regular youth group time) for 10 weeks. During this time we will learn about the beliefs and practices of the church so that we can follow God and participate in the church more fully and faithfully. This class will be confirmed on Easter Sunday, March 31. Contact Savanna to sign up by January 14th, or if you have any questions about Confirmation.



Christmas Eve Luminaries

Thank you to everyone who purchased luminaries in honor or memory of your loved ones. We received a lot of support for our Youth Mission Fund, and the pathway to the Christmas Eve Service was beautiful!

CHRISTMAS CARD FUNDRAISER

Thank you to everyone who purchased Christmas cards from our Children's Ministry. We hope they were a blessing to you, as well as the friends and family who received them! We raised over \$500.00 for our Children's Ministry Fund through this fundraiser!! That will go a long way to make our many awesome children's events possible this year, including our Saturday Morning CAFEs, Easter Egg Hunt, Art Camp, and more!



Joyfully Together: Valentine Dinner

Don't miss our 3rd annual Val's Diner Valentine Dinner on Sunday, February 4th at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall! You'll enjoy a delicious meal with your church family and some fun Valentine-themed games. The cost for dinner is only \$5 per person, and we know everyone will have a great time. We can't wait to see you there!!